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ABSTRACT

This practicum report analyzes a driver and student training program developed at an elementary school to improve students' bus conduct. Seventy percent of students require transportation by school bus. Except for chronic bus misconduct, discipline has not been a school concern. It was hypothesized that the lack of a comprehensive program addressing conduct improvement primarily accounted for the problem. This was supported by studies showing improvement with classroom student training. The practicum's goals were as follows: (1) to reduce the number of bus misconduct referrals from the previous year; (2) to increase bus driver utilization of effective strategies in behavior management and bus patrol; and (3) to develop student awareness (in grades 4-6) of the link between bus conduct and safety. The school implemented training programs for drivers and for students during classroom sessions with teachers. Results, which were evaluated by referral records and surveys of drivers and students, include the following: (1) bus referrals decreased, depending on infraction, by 50 percent to 61 percent--a substantial improvement in student behavior; (2) the majority of drivers surveyed correctly identified the effective strategies discussed in training; and (3) 80 percent of students correctly identified ridership responsibilities. Teachers, who valued including the training in classrooms, planned on continuation. Conduct improvement is attributed to participants' sense of involvement in the solution process. The report concludes with recommendations for elementary schools and with further program plans. Appendices provide survey instruments and an implementation calendar. (CJH)

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# PRACTICUM REPORT

**Center for the**
**Advancement of Education**
**Ed.D. Program**

## Improving Elementary School Student's Bus Behavior Through a Driver and Student Training Program

by

Donald M. Richardson

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**
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# Improving Elementary School Students' Bus Behavior Through a Driver and Student Training Program

by

Donald M. Richardson

Cluster XIX

A Practicum I Report Presented to the Ed.D Program
in Early and Middle Childhood
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1986

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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This practicum report was submitted by Donald M. Richardson under the direction of the Adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed. D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at NOVA University.

Approved: Walter Schurman
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Date of Final Approval of Report

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# ABSTRACT

Improving Elementary Students Bus Behavior Through a Training Program for Drivers and Students. Richardson, Donald M., 1986: Practicum Report, Nova University Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood.
Descriptors: Elementary Education/ Bus Transportation/ School Bus/ Student Transportation/ Behavior Problems/ Discipline Problems.

This practicum focused on improving elementary school students bus conduct through a driver training program and a classroom training program for students in grades four, five, and six. The lack of a comprehensive program designed to address the specific needs relative to improving student bus conduct was the primary causal factor for the existence of this problem. In a review of the literature the writer found that driver training programs and student training programs which focused on improving student bus conduct had been successfully implemented at the elementary school level.

The writer's goals were: (1) to decrease the total number of bus referrals received for student misconduct by 50%, when compared to 1985-86 levels, (2) to increase bus driver awareness of and utilization of effective behavior management strategies, (3) to increase bus driver awareness of and utilization of effective bus patrol utilization strategies, and (4) to increase student awareness (in grades four-six) of the link between bus conduct and the level of safety on the buses. In addressing these goals the writer developed and facilitated a training program for bus drivers which focused on strategies to effectively manage student bus conduct and appropriately utilize bus patrols. The writer also developed a student training program which classroom teachers presented. This program focused on the responsibilities students have in relation appropriate bus conduct.

The results of this practicum indicated that bus referrals decreased, depending on infraction, by 50% to 61% from 1985-86 levels. In relation to bus driver performance, 11 of the 13 bus drivers correctly identified the effective behavior management strategies presented in the driver training program and 10 of the 13 bus drivers correctly identified the effective patrol utilization strategies presented in the driver training program. In relation to student performance, 80% of the students in grade four and five correctly identified four of the five student ridership responsibilities and 80% of the students in grade six correctly identified all five student ridership responsibilities.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### Setting (Community/School)

The setting for this practicum was a 950 student elementary school (grades Kindergarten - Six) located in a metropolitan area of the Southeast. This elementary school draws its student population from a predominately (91%) Caucasian, upper-middle class catchment area which is in close geographic proximity to several major theme and entertainment parks.

Zoning and land development patterns in this area have resulted in residential, commercial, and resort areas being interspersed with each other.

This type of zoning and land development pattern has had a direct impact on this elementary school. This pattern has dispersed the student population over an area of 10 miles. The dispersion of the student population over such a large and diversely developed area necessitates that approximately 70% of the total student population be transported to and from school on school buses. There were 13 school buses with an average of 54 students per bus transporting students to and from this school.

Although this elementary school draws its student population from a large and diversely developed area, it enjoys a high degree of positive parental involvement and support from the community. Indicators of the high degree of positive parental involvement included: (1) 97% parent membership in the P.T.A., (2) 159 active school volunteers, and (3) a local School Advisory Council which met monthly with the administration.

The community support this school had was exemplified by the nine local businesses which became actively involved in the Partners in Education program. The participating businesses funded various school activities or provided specialized resources or services to the school.

This particular school was nominated by the district in January of 1986, for the United States Department of Education Center of Excellence program. This nomination was based on student test performance, active and successful parent and community involvement programs, comprehensive curriculum design, positive discipline, and participation in numerous pilot programs sponsored by the district, state, and outside agencies.

This elementary school did not have a discipline problem according to the school principal. Students were referred to the office 56 times for misconduct as outlined in the district's Code of Conduct, during the first semester of the 1985-86 school year. Discipline records and results from staff and parent surveys from the past three years indicated that discipline was not a major concern at this particular school. However, the principal believed as did 63% of the parents who responded to the Annual Survey last year (84-85), that misconduct on the school buses was the most serious and chronic behavior management problem at this school. During the first semester of the 1985-86 school year there were 97 bus referrals.

## Writer

The writer is a male Caucasian who was appointed assistant principal of this elementary school in August of 1985. Prior to this administrative appointment the writer was a classroom teacher and a guidance counselor at the elementary level in this district.

The writer performed the total array of administrative and supervisory functions in this school and these functions were generally equally shared with the principal. The array of duties the writer performed included: evaluation, instructional leadership, planning, discipline, personnel functions, office management, curriculum development, staff development, scheduling, budgeting and resource management, and community relations.

The writer had bus supervision as one of his assigned administrative responsibilities. Duties related to bus supervision included: (1) handling of all student bus discipline referrals, (2) daily supervision of and coordination of loading/ unloading of bus students, and (3) serving as the school contact for students, parents, bus drivers, and the area transportation director for concerns relating to all aspects of the student transportation program.

The performance of these duties typically took 10 hours per week, according to data obtained from a district conducted job analysis survey. The writer had the administrative authority to institute actions and policies which were designed to ensure that students riding buses behaved in a safe and orderly manner, ensure that the school was in compliance with district developed bus schedules, and provide for the resolution of transportation (bus) related concerns of students, parents, and bus drivers in a systematic, equitable, and timely manner.

The writer had the full support of the school principal in bus related matters and had established and maintained a good working relationship with the bus drivers, the area transportation director, students, and parents in regard to bus related concerns.

## CHAPTER II

## STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

### Problem Situation

The problem situation that existed at this elementary school was chronic student bus misconduct. During the first semester of the 1985-86 school year there were 97 bus referrals.

The four rule infractions for which students were referred included: (1) talking too loudly or with the dome lights on (39 referrals), (2) failure to remain seated (28 referrals), (3) disrespect to the driver (21 referrals), and (4) fighting (nine referrals).

The problem of chronic student bus misconduct presented significant administrative concerns for the writer as an average of 10 duty hours per week were being spent in bus related responsibilities. This problem also posed a significant safety concern according to the area transportation director. The director contended that the bus drivers needed to fully attend to driving the buses and not focus on the correction of student misconduct.

The writer had bus supervision as one of his assigned administratvie responsibilities. The duties which collectively comprised bus supervision were described on page three (Chapter I) of this report.

In fufilling bus supervision responsibilities the writer had: (1) developed and implemented a comprehensive plan for bus loading and unloading procedures, (2) developed an orientation sheet for parents on various aspects of the student transportation program, and (3) initiated and facilitated two meetings with all of the bus drivers and the area transportation director. The purposes of these meetings was to establish a cooperative working relationship, to review both school and district level bus policies and procedures, and to mutually solve problems.

The problem of chronic student bus misconduct was ranked by 10 of the 13 bus drivers who served this particular elementary school as their primary area of concern.

This problem had been addressed yet not solved satisfactorily through: (1) the previously described bus orientation sheet for parents of all bus riding students, (2) the two meetings (previously described) the writer facilitated with all of the bus drivers and the area transportation director, and (3) disciplinary actions taken by the writer. These disciplinary responses included counseling, parent contact, conferencing (with parents, students, and drivers), behavior contracting, assignment of a seat on the bus, corporal punishment, and bus suspension.

This array of intervention strategies had not satisfactorily solved the problem of chronic student bus misconduct. This problem was selected to be addressed via the practicum process as it met the practicum criteria.

Specifically, the problem this practicum focused on solving was to reduce the number of bus referrals received by 50% over a 10-week period.

## Documentation and Evidence of the Problem

The documentation that is presented as evidence of the existence and appropriateness of this problem (in relation to practicum problem criteria) includes data obtained from bus discipline referrals, parental perceptions about the school bus program (obtained from the 1984-85 parent survey), and information obtained from structured interviews and surveys with the bus drivers, the area transportation director, and the principal.

A primary source of documentation of the existence and appropriateness of this problem was the bus referrals received for student bus misconduct during the first semester of the 1985-86 school year. There were 27 bus referrals received in September, 26 in October, 21 in November, 19 in December (which was not a complete month for students due to the winter break), and four in the first two weeks of January (the end of the first semester). The following chart was developed to depict: (1) the rule infractions which comprised the bus referrals, (2) the total number of referrals received for each of these infractions, (3) the number of male and female students referred for each infraction, and 4) the grade level classification of these referred students (P= primary, grades Kindergarten - Three, I= intermediate, grades Four- Six).

| INFRACTIONS | TOTAL # REPORTED | FEMALES | P I | MALES | P I |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TALKING TOO LOUDLY OR WITH DOME LIGHTS ON | 39 | P | 8 | P | 6 |
| | | I | 14 | I | 11 |
| | | TOTAL | 22 | TOTAL | 17 |
| FAILURE TO REMAIN SEATED | 28 | P | 6 | P | 5 |
| | | I | 9 | I | 8 |
| | | TOTAL | 15 | TOTAL | 13 |
| DISREPECT TO THE DRIVER | 21 | P | 3 | P | 1 |
| | | I | 14 | I | 3 |
| | | TOTAL | 17 | TOTAL | 4 |
| FIGHTING | 9 | P | 2 | P | 1 |
| | | I | 4 | I | 2 |
| | | TOTAL | 6 | TOTAL | 3 |

P= PRIMARY
I= INTERMEDIATE

FIGURE 1

This chart points out that in grades Kindergarten - Six more males (60) than females (37) were referred for bus misconduct. Students in grades Four - Six (intermediate grades) were referred more often (65 referrals) than students in grades Kindergarten - Three (32 referrals). Talking too loudly or with the dome lights on was the infraction for which most students were referred (39 total referrals, males 22 times and females 17 times). Failure to remain seated accounted for 28 total referrals with males receiving 15 referrals and females receiving 13 referrals. Disrespect to the driver accounted for 21 total referrals with males receiving 17 referrals amd females receiving four referrals. Fighting accounted for nine total referrals with males receiving six referrals and females receiving three referrals.

Another source of problem documentation was parental perceptions of the bus transportation program. These perceptions were obtained from the 1985 parent survey (conducted in May of 1985). The results of this survey indicated that only three percent of the respondents (456 sureys were returned to the school) were very satisfied with the bus transportation program (discipline, scheduling and routing, overcrowding, and problem resolution procedures). This survey also indicated that 27% were generally satisfied and 44% were generally dissatisfied with the bus transportation program. It was also determine that 19% were very dissatisfied and seven percent had no opinion on the bus transportation program.

Parents were asked to rank in order (from area of greatest concern to area of least concern) the aspects of the bus transportation program (discipline, scheduling and routing, overcrowding, and problem resolution procedures) which most concerned them. Discipline was ranked the area of greatest concern followed by overcrowding, scheduling and routing, and finally problem resolution procedures were ranked as the area of least concern.

A final source of documentation was obtained via structured interviews with the bus drivers, area transportation director, and the principal. All 13 bus drivers were individually interviewed and asked to rank order their concerns (discipline, scheduling, overcrowding, problem resolution procedures) about the bus transportation program at this school. The results of this survey indicated that 10 of the 13 bus drivers ranked bus discipline as their primary concern (three ranked bus overcrowding as their primary concern). All 13 bus drivers were asked if additional training in managing student behavior (discipline) could be beneficial and 12 out of the 13 believed this could be of assistance to some degree.

The area transportation director was asked to rank order his concerns about the bus transportation program at this elementary school and the director ranked discipline as his primary area of concern. The director felt that effective discipline was highly related to the maximization of safety on the buses. The director stated that this particular elementary school was approximately 50% over district projections for bus referrals when ridership and demographic factors were considered.

The director further believed that if the bus drivers were devoting less than their full and total attention to their driving and the road, the potential for a safety problem to develop was greatly increased.

The principal was asked to rank order the same set of concerns about the bus transportation program and she rated discipline (management of student bus conduct) as her primary concern. Bus overcrowding was rated a related and close second in terms of concerns. The principal stated that during the first semester of the 1985-86 school year there were nearly twice as many office referrals for bus misconduct as there were office referrals for classroom misconduct. The principal felt that student bus misconduct was the most chronic and serious behavior management problem at this school. The principal stated that student bus behavior had improved somewhat due to the previously described interventions implemented by the writer, but desired to see a substantial decrease in the number of bus referrals as she believed they were highly correlated to bus safety.

The documentation presented served to cite evidence that the problem this practicum focused on solving did in fact exist and also validated the appropriateness of this particular problem as one which met the definitional criteria of a practicum problem.

## Analysis of the Causes of the Problem

In analyzing this problem to ascertain its probable causal factors the writer conducted individual interviews with all 13 bus drivers, a group of 10 parents (Local School Advisory Council), 10 referred and 10 nonreferred bus-riding students, and the area transportation director to gather input from their particular perspectives. The writer also spent extensive amounts of time observing the behavior patterns of bus-riding students and bus drivers, and carefully reviewed all bus referrals received (during the first semester of the 1985-86 school year) to determine if consistent patterns existed.

This blend of analytic methodology yielded findings which clearly indicated that there were four primary probable causes to this problem. These causal factors included: (1) inconsistent enforcement of the district adopted bus conduct rules by the bus drivers, (2) lack of knowledge of and utilization of effective behavior management strategies and techniques by the bus drivers, (3) ineffective use of bus patrols by the drivers, and (4) bus-riding students were not aware of their ridership responsibilities in relation to conduct and safety. Each of these four causal factors will be examined in detail as these particular factors appeared to have component parts to them.

In relation to causal factor number one, the bus drivers generally did not enforce the district adopted bus conduct rules in a consistent and predictable manner. This style of rule enforcement had fostered the development of the perception (in many students) that they simply didn't know what the parameters of acceptable bus conduct were on any given day.

Referred and nonreferred bus-riding students strongly and consistently believed that certain behaviors (e.g., loud talking, turning around in the seat) appeared to be permissible behaviors some of the time. However, while at other times (and for any number of possible reasons) the same behaviors were unacceptable as a consequence was given for these behaviors. This situation was discussed with the area transportation director (verbally and via an official memorandum) and with all of the bus drivers in a group meeting with the writer. The outcome of these discussions and actions was a slight improvement in consistency of rule enforcement. This improvement in consistency was not sustained over time.

In relation to causal factor number two, the bus drivers generally had displayed an apparent lack of knowledge of and corresponding lack of utilization of effective behavior management strategies and techniques. The typical range of ineffective behavior management responses employed by the bus drivers included yelling at students, threatening students, contracting with students and not adhering to the terms of the contract, and sentence writing. Yelling at students was a driver behavior pattern which had drawn considerable criticism from parents and students (referred and nonreferred). This particular behavior: (1) tended to increase the overall noise level on the bus, (2) model inappropriate patterns of behavior, and (3) generally placed the driver in an emotional response state as opposed to a rational and controlled response state when verbally disciplining students. It was clear that yelling had not improved driver control of student behavior and may have modified student behavior negatively (increased the overall noise level and modeled an inappropriate behavioral pattern).

Threatening students was another ineffective behavior management response employed by the bus drivers. Invariably this behavior had led to situations where drivers were placed in the position of not being able to enforce certain threats (e.g., threats made to students in areas drivers did not have the authority to implement actions) or placed them in the position of following through on a threat they could enforce but would rather not. Often the threat was made in anger and may not have been in the students or their best interest. The use of threats by the drivers had been a source of continuing concern for parents and students, as this practice did not promote the development of postive relationships based on respect.

Another behavior management response which was largely ineffective in managing student conduct was the use of behavior contracting. Drivers generally did not adhere to agreed upon (positive or negative) consequences. This particular strategy had the potential to be an effective behavior management strategy at this particular school. Students at this school generally responded to the use of contracts (academic and behavioral) positively. The pattern the bus drivers had established was to develop a contract with the student (generally in collaboration with the writer and parents) and not adhere to agreed upon consequences (positive or negative). The consistency which was critical to the sustained modification of behavior was not present.

This led students to believe that the contract was not to be taken seriously. The effective use of contracting had been discussed with the area transportation director and all of the bus drivers with the goal of establishing guidelines to help streamline and simplify the process. Contracting remained largely ineffective in controlling or modifying student bus behavior due to the lack of adherence to agreed upon consequences by the drivers.

A final ineffective behavior management response employed by the drivers was sentence writing. This driver disciplinary response had drawn extreme criticism from parents and had not been effective in modifying student behavior. Students who were assigned this particular sanction had devised ways to make it a game or something less than punishment. Another serious concern related to the use of sentence writing was that it was (and is) the position of the school district that writing as a punishment should be avoided. The district maintains that students need to be encouraged to write and not equate writing with punishment or negative experiences.

In relation to causal factor number three, the bus drivers had not effectively utilized the students serving as bus patrols. Two bus patrols were permitted on each bus and the students selected had to have been interviewed by the writer and had to also undergo periodic review of their role and responsibilities (focusing on the concrete and specific duties of being a bus patrol) with the writer. This system appeared to breakdown when the patrols were under the direction of the bus drivers as they were not provided with adequate guidance or supervision.

Many times the patrols were given too much freedom and often broke the conduct and safety rules they were supposed to model. The patrols were not modeling the type of behavior expected of students in a service related role.

The writer had worked closely with the drivers and patrols to remedy this situation. Most improvements noted had been of short duration and generally were not substantial.

In relation to causal factor number four, bus-riding students had generally not displayed the level of awareness and understanding of their conduct and safety responsibilities which was essential to the improvement of the overall climate of discipline on the buses.

The writer had met with individual students (referred and nonreferred), small groups of students, and entire bus loads of students to discuss conduct and safety responsibilities. No program existed which was designed to address the pertinent and critical aspects of ridership responsibilities.

This approach was not comprehensive and did not focus on teaching ridership responsibilities. This approach clearly focused on immediate problem solving and on the resolution of safety and conduct issues. The lack of a comprehensive and instructionally oriented program which focused on teaching students about their ridership responsibilities was a primary contributing factor to this problem in terms of causality. The four related factors outlined and examined had a strong causal link to the existence and perpetuation of this problem.

## Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

The problem which this practicum focused on solving was examined in relation to the professional literature. The review of the literature relating to the problem of chronic student bus misconduct indicated that: (1) bus discipline was a recognized and documented significant educational problem, (2) the formal training of school bus drivers in certain critical competencies (i.e., behavior management, first aid and safety, and mechanical aspects of operating a bus) was a practice numerous school districts were employing to improve driver performance and reduce bus related problems (discipline and safety) and driver turnover rates, and (3) the systematic and structured education of bus-riding students on ridership responsibilities (conduct and safety) was being implemented more frequently by school districts and state departments of education as part of the elementary school curriculum (in the area of safety).

## Bus Discipline as an Educational Problem

This section of the literature review examines bus discipline (misconduct) in terms of its legitamacy as a significant educational problem.

According to Copans and Gibbons (1984) bus discipline had become a major concern for school districts, bus drivers, school administrators, and parents. The issues associated with the problem of bus discipline included: (1) increased legal and financial concerns for the school district, (2) increased driver turnover rates, (3) increased administrative time required to deal with bus discipline problems, and (4) increased parental concern for the level of safety existing on school buses.

In an analysis of challenges facing school transportation programs in the 1980's, Farmer (1984) concluded that improving student discipline on school buses was an important issue to school districts. The growing number of disciplinary problems aboard buses was clearly linked to increased driver militancy, rapid turnover rates of drivers, increased transportation related expenditures, and other administrative and organizational problems.

The problem of discipline on school buses was the focus of a seminar presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of School Business Officials (1983). This seminar dealt with the legal, financial, and administrative aspects of the problem of bus discipline. At this seminar Gresham (1983) presented a paper in which he maintained that the growing problem of bus discipline was resulting in increased costs associated with school transportation programs and that school districts must develop systematic policies, procedures, and programs to address the growing incidence of discipline problems on school buses.

The Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, (1979) sponsored a program which the Salem (Oregon) School District piloted which focused on preventing and controlling misbehavior, violence, and vandalism by students riding school buses. The problem of misconduct by bus-riding students had become a concern for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention as data collected from a large sample of school districts throughout the nation indicated that this problem was substantial and apparently increasing. This program utilized strict and structured policies and procedures in relation to bus misconduct. Due to the documented incidence of misconduct on school buses and the success of the pilot program in Salem, this program was made available to other school districts via the National School Resources Network.

This section of the literature review examined bus discipline as an educational problem. The literature review clearly indicated that: (1) bus discipline was a significant educational problem with numerous ramifications (financial, legal, administrative, organizational) associated with it, (2) bus discipline appeared to be a problem which was widespread and increasing, and (3) bus discipline was a problem which was being addressed by educational administrators, school business officials, school transportation managers, school boards, and the Department of Justice. The growing incidence of this problem and its effects (legal, financial, administrative, organizational) clearly had a substantial impact on these varied groups.

## Formal Training of Bus Drivers

This section of the literature review examines the practice of formally training bus drivers in certain critical driver competencies. The goal of this training was generally to improve driver performance and reduce bus related problems (conduct and safety). Farmer's (1984) research indicated that the formal and continuing training of school bus drivers in specific competencies (i.e., passenger control and discipline, first aid and safety, understanding state and local policies and regulations, working effectively with school administrators, the transportation needs of the handicapped) that related to driver effectiveness was becoming an increasingly accepted practice which school districts generally perceived as being effective and worthwhile.

Copans and Gibbons (1984) strongly maintained that school bus drivers must receive continuing staff development on the management of student bus conduct. They contended that bus discipline had become a major concern of school districts, bus drivers, school administrators, and parents. Copans and Gibbons further maintained that school bus drivers most likely would receive increased training in managing student bus conduct as this concern appeared to be significantly related to driver turnover rates. Copans and Gibbons further believed that school bus drivers probably would have to become certified to operate a bus and that this certification process would include classroom experiences, examinations, periodic assessments of competency, and continuing staff development training and support.

The Oregon State Department of Education (1984) Training Course for Bus Drivers was a state mandated program which all bus drivers in the state of Oregon were required to take. All school districts were responsible for facilitating this course with their bus drivers. A comprehensive handbook served as the basic text in the course and focused on developing driver competency in the safe transportation of students. This course included 12 hours of formal, structured classroom instruction on: (1) driver qualifications, responsibilities, and regulations, (2) pupil behavior management strategies, (3) mechanical inspections and operations, and (4) emergency, accident, and special situation procedures. The goals of this driver competency training program were to: (1) provide systematic and specific training to school bus drivers in certain identified competencies which were deemed essential to their effectiveness, (2) increase overall bus safety, (3) reduce student misconduct on school buses, and (4) reduce driver turnover rates.

According to qualitative and quantitative data compiled by the Oregon State Department of Education this program was successful as it generally achieved its four goals.

Button (1984) developed a guide for bus drivers and school administrators which examined common conditions which prevented bus drivers from maintaining an appropriate level of discipline and safety on their buses. This guide provided concrete administrative remedies which addressed major discipline and safety concerns. This guide was practical in nature and focused on developing skills in bus drivers which facilitated the development of student ownership of a safe ridership attitude.

Gresham (1983) contended that intervention programs which specifically focused on bus driver training in critical competencies related to discipline and safety had generally been related to reduced student misconduct on buses.

The formal training of school bus drivers in critical competencies (passenger control and discipline, first aid and safety, understanding state and local policies and regulations, working effectively with school administrators, emergency and special situation procedures, and mechanical inspections and operations) had become an a practice which was generally believed to improve driver performance and to reduce bus related problems (conduct, safety, driver turnover).

Formal Education of Bus Riding Students on Conduct / Safety

The formal and systematic education of bus- riding students in appropriate bus conduct and safety was the focus of a program instituted by the Mesa (Arizona) Public School district (1977). This school district developed and implemented a classroom program for students in grades Kindergarten - Six. This program was designed to develop student awareness and understanding of bus ridership responsibilities. Lesson content focused on: (1) waiting for, boarding, and leaving the bus, (2) appropriate bus behavior, (3) bus safety, and (4) what to do in special situations (bus breakdowns, accidents, inclement weather, substitute drivers, emergency exiting of the bus). This program included detailed lesson plans for each area the program covered and listed related materials and resources needed. Enrichment activities, duplicating masters, letters to parents, and student evaluation instruments were also included. The structure of the lessons included learning songs and poems, role playing, class discussions, drawing, and quizzes. This elementary school safety education program was judged as being successful and was adapted and incorporated into the secondary education curriculum.

The Illinois State Board of Education (1980) developed a comprehensive guide for elementary school classroom teachers to use to teach students safe school bus riding practices. Topics covered in this guide included: (1) safe bus behavior, (2) the role of the bus driver, (3) boarding and exiting the bus, (4) crossing the road, and (5) using the emergency exit. This guide was concrete and specific and included lesson plans, duplicating masters, an activity guide, and tips for the teacher on what to emphasize in the presentations, discussions, and activities. Witmer (1980) maintained that the use of classroom time to teach elementary school students essential aspects of bus safety was a practice which could benefit students and school districts. Witmer further contended that students needed to receive classroom instruction on: (1) waiting for, boarding, and leaving the school bus, (2) appropriate bus conduct, (3) emergency bus procedures, and (4) proper bus manners (student- student, driver- student). Witmer suggested several approaches (similar to the Oregon and Illinois models) which school districts could employ as they planned and implemented bus safety programs which could be presented in the classroom.

This section of the literature review examined the practice of formally educating bus-riding students on ridership responsibilities (conduct and safety). The literature review indicated that classroom oriented ridership responsibility awareness programs had been successfully developed and implemented at the elementary school level. These programs tended to focus on the specific areas (conduct, boarding and exiting procedures, emergency procedures, role of the bus driver) which appeared to be critical to improving the overall level of conduct and safety on school buses.

## Chapter III

## ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

### Overview

The problem this practicum focused on solving was that of chronic bus misconduct by students. The general goals and specific objectives outlined in this chapter relate specifically to the documentation and evidence of the problem presented in Chapter II. These goals and objectives specify practicum expectations in terms of solving the problem of chronic bus misconduct by students.

### General Goals

The general goals of this practicum were projected statements of practicum expectations and included: (1) the improvement of student bus conduct, (2) a reduction in the number of bus referrals received (both total number of referrals and referrals for each of the four infractions for which students were referred to the writer) for student misconduct, (3) increased bus driver awareness of effective behavior management strategies and techniques, (4) development of bus driver awareness of specific strategies on how to appropriately utilize student bus patrols, and (5) development of student (grades four-six) awareness of specific bus ridership responsibilities relating to conduct and safety.

## Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this practicum were derived from the general goals and purposes of this practicum and were precise and measurable statements of expectations.

### Objective One

Behavior Expected: To improve student bus behavior (as defined by total number of bus referrals for misconduct) and reduce by 50% the total number of bus referrals received during the first three months (September - November) of the 1986-87 school year. The 1986-87 level of referrals was compared with the total number of bus referrals received during the same time period of the 1985-86 school year. There were 74 total bus referrals received in 1985-86 and the projected total number of referrals for 1986-87 was 37.

Evaluation Tool: The total number of bus referrals received by the writer during the first three months of the 1986-87 school year was compared to the total number of bus referrals received during the first three months (September - November) of the 1985-86 school year. The school copy of the bus referral form served as the evaluation instrument from which this data was obtained.

Standard of Performance: The total number of bus referrals received by the writer was projected to decrease by 50% from the total received during the first three months of the 1985-86 school year (74 referrals) to 37 total referrals received during the same time period of the 1986-87 school year.

Objective Two

Behavior Expected: To reduce by 50% the total number of bus referrals received by the writer during the first three months (September - November) of the 1986-87 school year for the following bus conduct infractions: (1) talking too loudly or with the dome lights on, (2) failure to remain seated, (3) disrespect to the driver, and (4) fighting.

Evaluation Tool: The total number of 1986-87 referrals received for each of the four above listed infractions was projected to decrease by 50% from the 1985-86 total number received by infraction. The school copy of the bus referral form served as the evaluation instrument from which this data was obtained.

Standard of Performance: The total 1986-87 number of bus referrals received for each of the four following infractions was projected to decrease by 50% from the total number received during the same time period of the 1985-86 school year.

### Referrals by Infraction

| (1985-86/ September - November)<br># of Referrals | | (1986-87/ September - November)<br>Projected # of Referrals (50% decrease) |
|---|---|---|
| 30 | Talking too loudly or with dome lights on | 15 |
| 23 | Failure to remain seated | 12 |
| 15 | Disrespect to the driver | 7 |
| 6 | Fighting | 3 |
| 74 Total<br>(1985-86) | | Total 37<br>(1986-87) |

### Objective Three

Behavior Expected: Documentation of bus driver awareness of five effective behavior management strategies and techniques.

Evaluation Tool: A 10 item written survey on effective behavior management served as the instrument from which evaluative data was gathered in relation to this objective. The writer administered this survey to all of the bus drivers following implementation. (See Appendix A for effective behavior management survey)

Standard of Performance: Results of this driver survey were projected to indicate that all bus drivers would identify the five effective behavior management strategies and techniques presented. The 10 possible items on this survey included five items which were examples of effective behavior managment strategies and techniques and five which were not.

Objective Four

Behavior Expected: Documentation of bus driver awareness of five strategies and techniques on how to effectively utilize student bus patrols.

Evaluation Tool: A 10 item written survey on effective utilization of bus patrols served as the instrument from which evaluative data was gathered. The writer administered this survey to all of the bus drivers following implementation. (See Appendix B for patrol utilization survey)

Standard of Performance: Results of this driver survey were projected to indicate that all bus drivers would identify the five effective patrol utilization strategies presented. The 10 possible items on this survey included five items which were examples of effective patrol utilization strategies and five which were not.

Objective Five

Behavior Expected Documentation of student (in grades four-six) awareness of five bus ridership responsibilities relating to conduct and safety.

Evaluation Tool: A 10 item written survey on student bus ridership responsibilities served as the instrument from which evaluative data was gathered in relation to this objective. Classroom teachers administered this survey to their students following implementation. The writer evaluated all completed student surveys to determine if the standard of performance was achieved, not achieved, or exceeded. (See Appendix C for student survey)

### Standard of Performance

Results of this student survey were projected to indicate that 80% of the total number of students in each grade surveyed would identify the five ridership responsibilities presented. The 10 possible items on this survey included five items which were examples of ridership responsibilities and five which were not.

### Evaluation Instruments

The instruments which were employed to assess and evaluate practicum outcomes are described in more detail in this section of the chapter.

### Objective One

The instrument which was employed to measure and assess outcomes in relation to this objective was the school copy of the bus referral form. These referral forms were logged and maintained in the official school discipline file. Utilizing the school copy of the bus referral form as the measurement instrument for this objective provided the required data on the number of referrals received. This measurement instrument was easily accessible and maintained an accurate record of the total number of bus referrals received.

### Objective Two

The instrument which was employed to measure and assess outcomes in relation to this objective was the school copy of the bus referral form. This form was described more fully under Objective One.

Objective Three

The instrument which was employed to measure and assess outcomes in relation to this objective was a written survey on bus driver awareness of the five effective behavior management strategies and techniques discussed in the driver training sessions.

This written survey followed (three weeks later) the bus driver training program and required the bus drivers to identify the five strategies discussed in the training program.

The writer administered this written survey to the bus drivers and evaluated the completed surveys to determine if the projected objective outcome was achieved or not achieved.

Objective Four

The instrument which was employed to measure and assess outcomes in relation to this objective was the a written survey on bus driver awareness of the five strategies on how to utilize student bus patrols.

Objective Five

The instrument which was employed to measure and assess outcomes in relation to this objective was a written 10 item survey on student bus ridership responsibilities (conduct and safety).

This written survey followed the classroom training program and required that 80% of the students in each grade surveyed correctly identify the five ridership responsibilities presented for this objective to be considered successfully achieved.

The writer trained the classroom teachers on how to administer this survey. The classroom teachers in grades four-six administered this survey at the conclusion of the classroom training program. The writer collected all completed surveys and analyzed them to determine if 80% of the students in each grade achieved the performance criteria.

### Mechanism for Recording Unexpected Events

The mechanism which was employed to record unexpected events was a daily implementation journal. This journal was in the form of a daily tape recording. The practicum adviser would have been immediately contacted if unexpected events occurred which had the potential to impact this practicum. No significant or unexpected events occurred during implementation. The use of a daily (taped) implementation journal was the most effective and efficient mechanism for the writer to use to record and document implementation and provide a mechanism to record the development of unanticipated events.

# Chapter IV

# SOLUTION STRATEGY

This chapter of the practicum report has several purposes including: (1) identifying and evaluating potential solution strategies found in the literature, (2) designating and justifying the selected solution strategy which was creative in the writer's work setting and logically related to the problem characteristics and inferred causes of the problem and (3) the presentation of a detailed plan on the action taken (the solution strategy) in terms of precise procedures and time frames.

## Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The Practicum Guide states that potential solution strategies (found in the literature) which had been attempted by others facing a similar problem must have been explored and evaluated in light of the specific needs and goals of the practicum.

One type of potential solution strategy found in the literature related to the use of strict disciplinary consequences with students whose bus conduct was inappropriate in relation to a set of specified rules and behavioral expectations. The focus of programs of this type appeared to be on reducing vandalism, violence, and serious bus misconduct. The use of consistent, strict and punitive disciplinary actions was the focus of these type programs. These programs focused on controlling serious bus misconduct and prevention was not emphasized.

An example of a program which fits this characterization was the Bus Conduct Program sponsored by the Department of Justice and the Salem (Oregon) Public School system (1979). This program emphasized controlling bus misbehavior, violence, and vandalism by bus riding students. A structured set of bus conduct rules and conduct expectations was implemented along with a hierarchy of sanctions and consequences for infractions. The Salem district reported that bus misconduct, violence, and vandalism decreased as a result of this program.

Solution strategies based on the philosophy and approach described above were not appropriate for the problem which this practicum focused on solving because of the dissimilarity in focus. The problem examined in this practicum related to student bus misconduct of a highly specific nature (failure to remain seated, talking too loudly or with the dome lights on, disrespect to the driver, and fighting) and did not include severe bus misconduct such as vandalism and violence.

The causal factors of this practicum problem also differed greatly from those of problems described in the literature. The causal factors of this practicum problem related to bus driver nonenforcement of bus conduct rules, utilization of ineffective behavior management strategies and techniques, ineffective utilization of student bus patrols, and students not being aware of their ridership responsibilities relating to conduct and safety. The goals and objectives of this practicum focused on improving driver competency in managing bus behavior and utilizing bus patrols and on developing student awareness of their ridership responsibilities. The goals and objectives do not emphasize strict behavioral control or discipline as did programs typified by this type of solution strategy.

It was clear that this type of solution strategy was not appropriate for solving the problem focused on in this practicum.

A second major type of solution strategy located in the literature related to the formal training of bus drivers in specific driver competencies. The goal of this training was improvement of bus driver effectiveness in managing student behavior, improving bus safety and refining driving capability. Potential solution strategies which specifically focused on developing driver competency in managing student bus behavior were worthy of serious consideration as they related to the causal factors of the practicum problem. Copans and Gibbons (1984) strongly maintained that school bus drivers must receive continuing staff development experiences relating to managing student behavior if they were to be effective in their role and driver turnover rates were to be reduced.

A program developed by the Oregon State Department of Education (1984) entitled the "Oregon Training Course for School Bus Drivers" was a state mandated initiative which each district was required to undertake with its bus drivers. The goals of this course were to: (1) provide school bus drivers with systematic and specific training on ways to improve bus safety, (2) increase driver effectiveness, and (3) instruct drivers on how to more effectively manage student conduct. This program was judged as being effective based on data compiled by the Oregon State Department of Education, which indicated that this program achieved its goals.

Along the same lines of research Gresham (1983) found that structured bus driver training programs which specifically focused on improving driver competency in areas related to conduct and safety had been correlated to reduced levels of student bus misconduct, improved bus safety, and increased driver perceptions of effectiveness.

Solution strategies such as those described above relate highly to the problem, causal factors, and objectives of this practicum. These types of solution strategies were strongly supported in the literature as being effective. The review of the literature produced another potential type of solution strategy which related to the formal training of bus riding students in appropriate bus conduct and safety. Solution strategies of this type related specifically to the problem, causal factors, and objectives of this practicum.

A program of this type was developed by the Mesa

(Arizona) School District (1977). This bus conduct improvement program was elementary based (grades Kindergarten- Six) and was designed to develop student awareness of their conduct and safety responsibilities as bus riders. This program was presented in the classroom by the classroom teacher. This program specifically focused on: (1) the importance of following bus rules, (2) boarding and exiting the bus safely, (3) special and emergency situations, and (4) interacting with substitute drivers. Materials which accompanied this program included detailed lesson plans, enrichment activities, duplicating masters, letters to parents, and evaluation instruments. This program was evaluated as being successful and was modified so it could be included in the secondary school safety curriculum in the Mesa School District.

The Illinois State Board of Education (1980) developed a comprehensive guide for elementary classroom teachers to use to instruct students on safe bus ridership practices. This guide focused on developing student awareness of the importance of appropriate and safe bus conduct in a variety of situations. This guide was included in the safety curriculum of numerous school districts and has been requested as a supplement to existing safety education programs by numerous school districts in other states.

It was clear that solution strategies which focused on classroom training of students on their conduct and safety responsibilities as bus riders was viewed as being effective and worthwhile and correlated highly to the specific problem, causal factors, needs, goals and objectives of this practicum.

The review of the literature relating to potential solution strategies clearly indicated that the training of bus drivers in behavior management competencies and the classroom training of students on their conduct and safety responsibilities as bus riders were potentially effective types of solution strategies. These potential strategies appeared appropriate as the causal factors and objectives of this practicum were very similar.

## Description of Selected Solution

The solution strategy which was implemented to solve the problem focused on in this practicum was a combination of the two potential solution strategies described in the previous section of this chapter. The designated solution strategy consisted of five, one hour bus driver training sessions and three, 45 minute classroom (in grades four - six) student training sessions which focused on student ridership responsibilities. In addition to the driver training sessions the writer met with all of the bus drivers the first Wednesday of each month for 30 minutes to discuss any problems that may have arisen and to reinforce the concepts and procedures that were presented in the driver training sessions. These were informal meetings with the emphasis being placed on problem solving and reinforcement of driver training session content.

To supplement and reinforce the training the students received the writer visited all classrooms in grades four - six once during the months of September, October, and November (for 15 minutes). These visits were designed to review student ridership responsibilities, answer questions, and clarify policies and procedures. These visitations were scheduled with each classroom teacher.

This type of solution strategy had not been attempted in the writer's work location and was a creative intervention which did not duplicate or approximate any program which existed.

The five bus driver training sessions focused on developing driver awareness of effective behavior management techniques and strategies and on how to effectively utilize student bus patrols. All of the bus drivers who served this particular elementary school participated in this program. This program was implemented in the fall (August 25, 1986) with the drivers meeting with the writer each weekday (August 25-29) from 12:30 - 1:30 pm. The writer facilitated all training sessions and administered the two post intervention driver surveys (managing behavior and utilizing bus patrols effectively) to the bus drivers after the training sessions concluded. These surveys were designed to determine if the bus drivers retained the information presented in the training sessions over time. A guide was developed to accompany the driver training sessions and served as the text for the training sessions.

The second portion of the solution strategy was the (grades four - six) student bus ridership responsibilities program. This program consisted of three, 45 minute sessions presented by the classroom teachers in grades four - six. This program focused on developing student awareness about personal responsibility for bus behavior and how bus behavior directly impacts the level of safety on the buses. The classroom teachers were trained by the writer on how to implement this program, in a one hour training session.

## Report of the Action Taken

The report of the action taken section of this chapter has as its purpose the detailed description of the implementation phase. This is included to allow for replication and duplication. Difficulties encountered during the implementation phase which may have caused any deviations from the proposal are also discussed in this section.

The plan of action implemented included: (1) the five session bus driver training program (see Bus Driver Training Guide), (2) the one session teacher training program (see Teacher Training Guide, (3) the three meetings (the first Wednesday of each month September - November) held with all of the bus drivers to problem solve and address concerns, (4) the survey session with the drivers, (5) the once monthly classroom visitations by the writer to discuss any bus related concerns, (6) and the monitoring of bus referrals received (September - November). (See Appendix D - Implementation Calendar)

The bus driver training program and student training program are described in complete detail in the following Bus Driver Training Guide and Bus Rider Responsibilities Program Guide.

There were no significant difficulties encountered during implementation and the plan of action described in the proposal was strictly adhered to and carried out.

# Bus Driver Training Guide.......

# or

# On the Road to Successfully Managing Bus Behavior

Overview

This training guide was developed to assist you to become more effective managers of student bus behavior. We have worked together to improve the discipline on our buses and this program is a planned, formal approach of continuing to look at ways of improving the discipline on our buses.

Goals

The goals of this program include:

(1) Improved bus driver awareness of and utilization of effective behavior management strategies and techniques.

(2) Improved bus driver utilization of bus patrols.

(3) Improved student bus conduct as evidenced by a reduction (50%) in bus referrals, compared to numbers of referrals received during 1985-86.

(4) Improved communication between and among the bus drivers, the assistant prinpical and the area transportation director. (We have had a good working relationship and this program should further strengthen it.)

The Particulars

Who: All bus drivers serving this school

What: Bus driver training program focusing on improving student bus conduct

When: Monday, August 25 - Friday, August 29, from 12:15 - 1:15 each day

Where: Conference Room (216) (upstairs next to the Media Center)

Why: To improve your skill in managing bus behavior, improve the discipline on the buses, and increase the level of safety on the buses.

Monthly Meetings: All drivers will meet with the assistant principal the first Wednesday (from 12:30 - 1pm) during the months of September, October and November (September 3, October 1, November 5) in the conference room. These monthly meetings will be informal discussion and problem solving sessions.

Note: Absences - If you miss any of the five sessions you will have a make-up session during the week of September 1

* (There were no make-up sessions needed)

Surveys - There will be a follow-up session on Monday, September 15 from 12:30 - 1pm in the conference room. During this session you will complete two surveys relating to the information presented in the sessions. Refreshments will be provided at all sessions and at all three monthly meetings!

The area transportation director will be participating in all of the training sessions and the follow-up survey session, as he is committed to the goals of this program.

By working together we can improve the behavior of our bus students and the level of safety on the buses.

## TRAINING SCHEDULE

Session One (Monday, August, 25 12:15-1:15 Conference Rm.)

1.1 Overview of Driver Training Program

1.2 Review of Driver Training Guide

1.3 Causes of Bus Misbehavior (Active Participation)

1.4 Problem - Solving Model (Active Participation)

1.5 Questions / Concerns, Review of Session

Session Two (Tuesday, August 26, 12:15 - 1:15 Conference Room)

2.1 Overview of Session Two

2.2 Establishing Limits of Acceptable Behavior (Activity)

2.3 The Importance of Being Consistent (Activity)

2.4 Questions / Concerns, Review of Session

Session Three (Wednesday, August 27, 12:00 - 1:00, due to early dismissal, conference Room)

3.1 Overview of Session Three

3.2 Logical Consequences (Activity)

3.3 Analyzing Referred Bus Behavior (Activity)

3.4 Questions / Concerns, Review of Session

Session Four (Thursday, August 28, 12:15 - 1:15 Conference Room)

4.1 Overview of Session Four

4.2 Effectively Utilizing Bus Patrols (Activity)

4.3 Question / Concerns, Review of Session

Session Five (Friday, August 29, 12:15 - 1:15 Conference Room)

5.1 Overview of Session five

5.2 Review of Sessions One - Four (Activity)

5.3 Developing Five Effective Behavior Management Strategies (Activity)

5.4 Developing Five Effective Patrol Utilization Strategies (Activity)

5.5 Looking Ahead (Survey Session)

5.6 Review of Session

5.7 Evaluation and Closure (Active Participation)

Session One

This session focuses on:

(1) Orienting you to the driver training program and the guide.

(2) Establishing the tone within this group which is conducive to sharing of ideas and professional growth.

(3) Examining and sharing your perceptions on the cause of bus misconduct.

(4) Examining and applying a systematic problem solving model to the causes of bus misconduct you have identified.

Program / Guide Overview

The assistant principal will conduct this overview.

Causes of Bus Misconduct

Misconduct occurs for many reasons and it is critical that we take time to think about what is causing misconduct on the school buses. Be honest and focus on what you believe are the primary causes of misconduct on your bus. We sometimes tend to focus on addressing the misconduct from a disciplinary position and never really examine or address the causes or roots of the problem. This approach is ineffective as the reasons for the misconduct are never really addressed and the misconduct may continue in spite of the disciplinary actions taken to stop it.

List the two primary causes of misconduct on your bus. Don't limit your thoughts, as the causes of bus misconduct are many and varied and may differ from bus to bus. We will share your ideas with the group.

Cause of Misconduct:

Cause of Misconduct:

The causes you described should represent the primary reasons why you believe there is some level of misconduct on your bus. Do you focus on the misconduct exclusively? Do you deal with why this misconduct exists? (Group discussion)

Now that we are all aware of what each of us perceives the primary causes of misconduct to be we need to examine and apply a systematic problem solving model to these problems. This model will allow us to address the underlying causes of misconduct and not just focus on correcting behavior (again and again).

### Problem Solving Model

This model focuses on systematically defining a problem, identifying possible solutions, evaluating possible solutions, designating a solution strategy, implementing this strategy, and evaluating the effectiveness of this strategy in solving the defined problem.

Model

Step One: Define the problem (specifically, clearly, and limit it).

Step Two: Generate (but don't evaluate) all possible solutions.

Step Three: Evaluate each possible solution in terms of its effectiveness and your resources and needs.

Step Four: Designate a solution strategy (based on the evaluation criteria described in step 3).

Step Five: Plan for and implement this solution strategy (it is critical that you plan, prior to implemenation, how this strategy will be made operational and monitored so necessary adjustments can be made).

Step Six Make adjustments to strategy during implementation. You cannot forsee everything!

Step Seven Evaluate! (Did this solution strategy solve this problem? Was it time and resource effective? Did it meet your needs?)

Step Eight: Rethink your problem, if this solution strategy didn't meet your needs or solve your problem or solve it in an effective manner, you need to go back to step number one and determine if you have adequately defined and limited your problem. Then proceed through the remaining steps once more. (Group Discussion)

Now that we have examined and discussed this systematic way to solve problems we are going to have the opportunity to apply this model to one of causes of misbehavior you described previously. As this is a practice exercise we will only be able to go through steps one through four. (The assistant will select a problem and lead the group through this process).

Step One: Problem Definition (Be specific, clear, and limited)

Step Two: Generate all possible solutions to this problem. Don't evaluate! List at least five possible solutions.

Step Three: Evaluate each possible solution in terms of its effectiveness and your needs and resources.

| Solution | Pro's | Con's |
|---|---|---|
| One | | |
| Two | | |
| Three | | |
| Four | | |
| Five | | |

Step Four Designate a solution strategy based on the evaluation conducted.

We will discuss why this particular solution strategy was selected. List three reasons why this step this particular solution strategy was selected.

One
Two
Three
(Group discussion)

## Review and Closure

This session has focused on the need to critically examine and address the causes (the reason why) of bus misconduct. Focusing on disciplining the presenting behavior is an ineffective practice as the reason for the problem still exists. This session has also examined how the use of a systematic problem solving model can give you a mechanism to address and solve bus problems. This process seems complicated and lengthly but its payoffs include the avoidance of quick fix or short lived and knee jerk responses to problems which do not and have not solved the bus problems we have. (Group Discussion)

## Session Two

This session will focus on:

(1) The importance of establishing reasonable limits of acceptable bus behavior.

(2) The importance of being consistent in your interactions with children and adhering to the limits of acceptable behavior you establish.

## Establishing Limits of Acceptable Behavior

Children need to know that they have clearly defined and consistently adhered to limits on their behavior. This need for structure and limits is especially significant on the buses. Children at this school have tended to perceive that many times there were not clearly spelled out and adhered to limits on bus behavior. This has led to increased bus conduct problems and bus referrals.

When children clearly understand (and it is our job as adults to articulate this to them) what the limits of acceptability are and what we expect of them, they are able to move toward being more responsible for their behavior. When children understand what is acceptable and what is not acceptable it becomes their choice to exceed these limits with the knowledge that a consequence will occur.

All Children Need

- An environment which is structured and predictable.
- To hear the adult verbalize what the limits of acceptability are.
- To see you adhere to these limits (practice what you preach).
- The understanding that it becomes their choice and responsibility if they exceed behavioral expectations and limits.

When you set and adhere to reasonable limits on behavior on the buses the children will begin to perceive that you care enough about them to set limits for them and that everyone is treated fairly. Children will also perceive that the bus environment is similar to the classroom environment they are familiar with.

Activity

Using our preceding discussion on establishing limits of acceptable behavior, briefly describe the limits of acceptable behavior you have on your bus in regard to talking on your bus.

### The Limits of Acceptability (Talking)

What is acceptable?

How did you arrive at this?

How did you communicate this to your students?

How did you demonstrate adherence to this?

What is unacceptable?

How did you arrive at this?

What is your plan of consequences for exceeding these limits?

(Group discussion and sharing)

These questions were designed to stimulate your thinking about the importance of establishing limits on bus behavior.

### The Importance of Being Consistent

Consistency is critical to the establishment of limits on bus behavior. Once limits have been established and have been clearly communicated they must be consistently adhered to if they are to have credibility with the children. When you do not consistently adhere to the limits you have established, children learn that you do not mean what you say and that everyone is not treated fairly. Children also learn that it may be worth the chance that they won't get a consquence if they exceed a limit. This had led to increased bus referrals.

Children must know that certain behaviors will consistently draw a consequence. This takes much effort on your part but the cost of being inconsistent is increased bus problems. Children need to know that you are fair and treat everyone consistently and that if they exceed a limit you have established it will be their choice as they clearly understood the limit and the concept that a consequence will accompany their transgression. Children need to know that there is stability on the bus and that certain behaviors will always draw a consequence.

Children need to understand that you mean what you say and that it applies to everyone all of the time. This is a tall order but one which should be strived for as it has been a primary cause of many of our bus conduct problems. (Group Discussion)

Activity

Describe how consistently you have dealt with the problem of disrespectful behavior or verbalizations to the driver. We will share our responses.

Behavior: Disrespectful behavior/ verbalizations to the driver.

Indicate the degree of consistency you have displayed in adhering to the limits you have for this type of student behavior.

_____High consistency in adhering to limits
(responded to all problems)

_____Moderate consistency in adhering to limits
(responded to most, but not all problems)

_____Low consistency in adhering to limits
(responded to half or less of problems)

Describe the results of your level of consistency in adhering to your limits of acceptability in relation to disrespect. (Group Discussion)

## Review and Closure

This session has emphasized the vital importance of establishing and articulating (by words and deeds) to students what the limits of acceptable bus behavior are. Children need to know what is expected of them and what to expect if they go beyond these limits. Children also need to know that everyone is treated in the same predictable manner.

This session has also emphasized the extreme importance of being consistent in your interactions with children. It is essential that you be as consistent with children as possible so they will have a predictable and structured environment. This is a basic developmental need of all children and has been the cause of many of our bus conduct problems.

It takes much effort on your part to establish, articulate, model, and consistently adhere to limits you have set for behavior. Major improvements in conduct will be seen if you implement these strategies.

## Session 3

This session will focus on:

(1) Discussing the use of logical consequences.

(2) Analyzing the four behaviors for which students receive bus referrals (talking too loudly or with the dome lights on, failure to remain seated, disrespect to the driver, fighting) to determine what steps can be taken to reduce their incidence.

## Logical Consequences

The use of logical consequences is closely related to the material covered in Session Two, relating to the need to consistently adhere to behavioral limits and apply consequences when these limits are exceeded. A logical consequence is a predetermined and clearly articulated consequence children know they will consistently receive if they behave in certain ways or exceed limits of acceptability. This type of consequence must relate logically to the behavioral infraction. For example, you may have an established rule that once students are seated they cannot move to another seat. The logical consequence which could apply for breaking this rule could be that violators would have to sit behind the driver or in another assigned seat for a specified period of time. This type of consequence logically links the behavior to the consequence. Having students write sentences for changing seats is not a logical consequence for this behavior as there is not a logical link between the two.

It is imperative that children know what your expectations and limits are and what your consequences are for their exceeding them.

### Advantages of using logical consequences

(1) Logical consequences help children understand what will happen to them if they choose to behave in certain ways you deem unacceptable.

(2) Logical consequences allow children to be responsible

for their behavior as they understand the rules and the consequences for exceeding these rules. It becomes their choice if they receive any consequence for inappropriate behavior.

(3) The bus driver does not have to constantly think of consequences for misbehavior. Consequences have been thought through and are predetermined. This helps avoid inappropriate or spur of the moment emotionally oriented consequences being used and projects consistency and fairness to the students.

Activity

Based on your experiences and the information presented above what would you determine to be logical consequence for a student who writes or marks on a bus seat.

The Logical Consequence is to______________________________

______________________________________________________________.

How does this consequence relate to writing or marking on bus seat?

How would you plan on communicating this consequence to students?

Have you used this type of approach? If so, what results have you had?

(Group discussion and sharing)

Analyzing Referred Bus Behaviors

This phase of the session will focus on analyzing the four behaviors for which students receive bus referrals to determine why each of these four behaviors are chronic problems. The second and equally important part of this activity will be to apply the problem solving model presented in the first session, to each of these behaviors. The steps in the model include: (1) problem definition and limitation, (2) generation of possible solutions (nonevaluatively), (3) evaluation of possible solutions, and (4) determination of solution.

The assistant principal will conduct this activity on the chalkboard and your responses will be recorded for each problem and this information will be copied and given to you as a resource to add to this guide. We want to focus on application of the problem solving model to these problems. This activity is designed to help pinpoint possible strategies which you can implement and evaluate. These strategies which may help reduce or solve the behavior problems associated with bus referrals.

## Review and Closure

This session has emphasized the importance of utilizing logical (predetermined and clearly communicated) consequences. The use of established and consistently adhered to behavioral limits in conjunction with consistent adherence to these limits and the use of logical consequences constitute the foundation of an effective bus behavior management program. Building upon these three concepts you will have the basics of a sound behavior management plan which you can adapt to the specific needs of your personality and your bus riders.

This session has also emphasized how to apply the problem solving model to the four behaviors for which students are referred. It is essential that you implement, adjust, and evaluate the strategies selected to solve or reduce the incidence of bus behavior problems. The typed compilation of your ideas will serve as a valuable resource to you on how to problem solve and on how we can develop plans to address the behaviors for which students are referred.

## Session Four

This session focuses on how to utilize bus patrols most effectively. The specific topics which will be discussed include: (1) children supervising children, (2) patrol selection procedures, (3) duties of a bus patrol, and (4) the training and guidance of patrols.

Bus patrols have the potential to be a tremendous asset to bus drivers if they are utilized in an appropriate manner. We have had problems with the utilization of bus patrols and it is the goal of this session to address these problems and resolve them so bus patrols will be as effective as possible.

## Children Supervising Children

This section was included because this has been an a continuing concern relating to bus patrols. District policy is clear in that children are not to be responsible for the supervision of other children. The driver is the adult responsible for the direct supervision of all of the children riding the bus. Children resent other children telling them what to do and many fights, arguments, and other problems have developed due to this factor. Children serving as bus patrols may assist the driver by helping seat children, serving as an extra set of eyes and ears (according to the area transportation director), and by performing duties. These duties include helping out in emergencies, orienting substitute drivers and new students, and performing an array of other service related duties. Do not place children in the position of rule enforcer or supervisor as this is your duty. Patrols can assist you in many ways but supervision is not one of them. (Group discussion)

Activity

Relate one experience you have had with a patrol overstepping his/her appropriate role and the results of this action. Describe how you handled this situation also.

Situation:

Results:

Response:

(Group sharing and discussion)

Patrol Selection Procedures

Children serving as patrols need to be carefully and systematically selected to ensure that the best candidates are selected.

Many problems have arisen because of poor patrol selections. The implementation of a procedure to ensure that students who could be effective as bus patrols needs to be a top priorty.

Patrol Selection Guidelines

(Based on district policies, transportation department recommendations, and the needs of this school.)

(1) Students from grades five and six.

(2) Two patrols per bus, one substitute patrol allowed.

(3) Bus drivers submit names of patrol candidates to the assistant principal for review and approval or nonapproval. The following factors are carefully considered in this review:

- the disciplinary record (school/bus) of the student
- the leadership potential of the student
- the type of relationship the student has with his/her peers
- the ability to serve as a model for other students
- recommendations from classrooom teachers and other staff members
- satisfactory interview with the assistant principal (focusing on why the student wants to be a patrol and responses to case scenarios)
- parental permission statement

4. The assistant principal will meet with you to discuss your candidates and discuss their acceptance or rejection (and reasons for either) as a patrol.

This procedure will ensure that students selected have the highest probability of serving effectively as bus patrols. If adjustments in this procedure become necessary, you will be informed of them. These patrol selection guidelines will be included in the school handbook so parents and students will understand this procedure.

Duties of Bus Patrols

In order for bus patrols to be effective and to perform appropriate service related functions, the duties of a bus patrol must be consistent on all buses which serve this school. Many problems have arisen because the patrols have significantly different duties (many times not in line with the service orientation they should maintain) on each bus. This is unacceptable as consistency in duty is critical to the effective utilization of bus patrols. Patrols, parents of patrols, bus drivers, the Local School Advisory Council and the area transportation director will all receive a written copy of the duties of bus patrols.

Duties of Bus Patrols

(1) Helping seat students under the guidance of the bus driver.

(2) Orienting new bus riding students to the bus rules, procedures, and stops.

(3) Orienting substitute bus drivers to rules, procedures and stops.

(4) Patrols are only on duty while they are on the bus. They are not on duty at bus stops or when the driver is off of the bus.

(5) Reporting rule infractions to the bus driver. Patrols

at no time will intervene with students. Drivers must see infractions if a referrals is going to be written.

(6) Patrols are never to touch other students, order or direct other students, yell or scream at other students, or in any way directly supervise other students.

(7) Patrols must follow all bus conduct rules and serve as a model for other bus students.

(8) Patrols can help out in emergency situations (unloading through the emergency exit).

(9) Opening and closing windows on the bus.

(10) Checking to ensure that no personal items have been left on the bus.

(11) Assisting injured or young students as specifically needed (e.g., help carry bookbag).

This list of duties for all bus patrols will help ensure consistency in duties and that they perform appropriate duties. Any deviation from these prescribed duties must be cleared through the assistant principal.

## Training and Guidance of Patrols

This phase of the session focuses on the training of bus patrols and the responsibility the driver has to provide the patrols with guidance and feedback. Patrol training will consist of the approved patrol condidates meeting with the assistant principal to review the duties of a patrol, patrol qualifications, how to remain a patrol, and possible reasons for being taken off of patrol duty. Once each month the assistant principal will survey all bus drivers to review patrol performance. If problems arise or the student fails to perform appropriately or no longer meets the qualifications for this duty the assistant principal will intervene and decide if the student will remain as a patrol.

The assistant principal will maintain a file on each bus patrol which will include the parental permission letter, notes from the interview session (with the assistant principal), and any information received from parents, students or the driver which relates to the patrol.

It is believed that the training provided by the assistant principal will improve patrol performance and the monitoring mechanisms devised will allow the assistant principal to closely evaluate their performance. (Group discussion)

Are there any other areas which need to be included in the training of patrols?

1.

2.

Guidance from the driver

It is absolutely essential that the bus drivers provide the patrols with guidance and feedback on their performance on a situational basis. This is sometimes called coaching. This means the driver must take the initiative in providing concrete and specific guidance and feedback on performance with an emphasis on improving performance in specific situations.

The feedback function you will provide is very important. Patrols need to know how well they perform in concrete and specific terms. Patrols need to receive feedback on appropriate as well as inappropriate performance. This will help reinforce appropriate performance and also let the patrols know that you are monitoring their performance and that you care enough to point out areas in which they need to improve. These functions are critical to the effectiveness of the patrol program.

Review and Closure

This session has focused on the appropriate and effective utilization of bus patrols. the children cannot supervise other children and the procedure used for selecting bus patrols and on the duties of bus patrols.

The final point emphasized in this session related to the responsibility the driver has to give guidance, feedback to the patrol so performance can be improved on and appropriate performance reinforced.

Session 5

This session will focus on the following:

(1) A review of the primary points covered in sessions one - four.

(2) Defining five strategies (drawn from the session content) on ways to more effectively manage bus behavior.

(3) Defining five strategies (drawn from the session content) on how to more appropriately and effectively utilize bus patrols.

(4) A discussion on the two driver surveys relating to behavior management and patrol utilization. Survey format will be discussed also.

(5) An evaluative activity designed to bring closure to this program.

(6) An overview of the monthly driver meetings.

## Summary of Sessions

### Session One

This session focused on the importance of carefully examining the causes of misbehavior on your bus. Too often our approach has been to treat the presenting behavior and not address the underlying causes of these behaviors. This is an ineffective approach as problems do not get solved until the factors causing them have been addressed. Session one also focused on how to use a problem solving model to systematically solve problems. This model provides you with a step-by-step approach to systematically solve bus problems. (Questions and concerns relative to session one will be addressed at this point)

### Session Two

This session focused on the importance of establishing limits of acceptable bus behavior. It is critical that the driver clearly define what the limits of acceptability are in relation to bus behavior and that the driver communicate these expectations to the students. The importance of adhering to these limits in a consistent manner was also emphasized.

This session also focused on the importance of being consistent in your interactions with children. Children need consistency so their environment will be stable and predictable and they will perceive you as being fair and equitable. Inconsistency has resulted in many serious bus problems for us and is an area needing improvement. (Questions and concerns relative to session two will be addressed at this point)

### Session Three

This session focused on the use of logical consequences when students choose to exceed the limits of acceptability you have established on your bus. It was stressed that logical consequences are predetermined consequences which specify what type of consequence will accompany what type of infraction. The consequence must logically relate to the nature of the infraction and must be clearly understood by the students.

This session also focused on analyzing the four bus behaviors for which students are referred to the assistant principal. The problem solving model was applied and the results compiled and distributed to you as a resource. This session tied together sessions one, two, and three and laid the foundation from which to implement a sound and effective behavior management plan. (Questions and concerns relative to session three will be addressed at this point)

### Session Four

This session focused on how we can better select, train, and utilize bus patrols so they will perform a useful service on the buses. Topics covered in this session included district policy relating to children supervising children and the resultant problems this practice brings.

Patrol selection procedures were described and outlined with the emphasis being on selecting students who will have the highest probability of being successful as bus patrols. The duties of bus patrols were clearly described and emphasized and service was stressed.

Duties of patrols are consistent on all buses.

The training procedures for bus patrols were described and the need for the driver to provide situational guidance (coaching) relative to performance was discussed. The use of feedback from the driver relating to improving performance or reinforcing appropriate performance was also discussed. (Questions and concerns relative to session four will be addressed at this point)

### Review of Strategies for Effective Behavior Managment

This review will highlight five strategies which are effective for managing bus behavior. These specific strategies were drawn from the session content and will help prepare you for the upcoming behavior management survey. There are certainly other behavior management strategies than the five presented here, but these five are of primary importance as they relate specifically to solving the problems we face on our buses daily.

### Strategy One

Carefully examine bus misconduct in terms of its underlying causes. Do not focus just on the presenting behaviors, focus on the reason this problem exists.

### Strategy Two

Establish, communicate, and adhere to limits of acceptable bus behavior. Develop and stick to behavioral expectations for students.

### Strategy Three

Be as consistent in your interactions with children as possible. When behavioral limits are exceeded you must consistently adhere to your plan of response and action. Children equate consistency with fairness.

### Strategy Four

Utilize predetermined logical consequences for infractions of your behavioral expectations. Communicate these consequences to the students and adhere to them.

### Strategy Five

Utilize bus patrols as providers of services not supervisors of other children. Supervision is the driver's responsibility and children supervising children is not permitted by district policy.

(Questions and concerns relative to these specific strategies will addressed at this point).

### Review of Strategies for Effective Patrol Utilization

This review will highlight five strategies which are effective in utilizing bus patrols. These specific strategies were drawn from the content of session four and will help you prepare for the upcoming patrol utilization survey. There maybe more than the five effective patrol utilization strategies presented in this program. The five represent the areas of greatest importance to our solving problems relating to our bus patrol program.

Strategy One

Children at no time should have the responsibility of supervising other children. Due to the legal ramifications of such a practice district policy strictly prohibits this.

Strategy Two

Careful attention must be given to patrol selection so that students who have the highest potential to serve effectively will be chosen. The driver has a responsibility to nominate responsible and dependable children.

Strategy Three

It is the responsibility of the bus driver to ensure that their bus patrols strictly adhere to the list of duties developed by the school.

Strategy Four

It is the responsibility of the bus driver to provide situational guidance relative to performance. Patrol performance can improved or reinforced through this guidance.

Strategy Five

It is the responsibility of the bus driver to ensure that their patrols serve as models of appropriate and expected behavior for all of the other bus students.

(Questions and concerns relative to these specific strategies will be addressed at this point).

Looking Ahead to the Survey Session

The two surveys which will be administered on Monday, September 15, 1986 (12:30-1pm) will serve to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of this driver training program. One survey will focus on strategies for effective behavior management and the other on effective utilization of bus patrols. Each survey will have 10 items with five of them representing effective practices or strategies and five of them representing ineffective practices or strategies. You will have to identify the five effective strategies on each of the surveys. The surveys will relate to the content presented in the sessions and the review portion of this session will be very useful to you in preparation for these surveys! The results of these surveys will be used to determine if this program achieved two of its goals. One goal related to improving driver awareness of effective behavior management strategies and the other related to effective patrol utilization strategies being implemented.

## Training Program Evaluation

The final phase of this session is an evaluation of the total program. The following survey was designed to elicit your honest feedback on this program. Do not put your name on this survey. Your responses will assist in evaluating this program and your time and cooperation has been greatly appreciated!

(1) This bus driver training program has the potential to improve my skills in managing bus behavior and utilizing bus patrols more effectively.

________YES ______NO _______NOT SURE

Comments:

(2) I will apply the strategies presented in this program to determine if they will be effective on my bus.

_______YES _______NO ________NOT SURE

Comments:

(3) I would recommend that bus drivers which serve other schools, with needs similar to ours, participate in this program.

_______YES _______NO ________NOT SURE

Comments:

(4) I would rate the value of this program to me as:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ___Very Valuable | ___Valuable | ___Not Valuable |
| (I can use all of the ideas presented) | (I can use most of the ideas presented) | (I can use less than half of the ideas presented) |

Comments:

(5) How could this program be improved?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Follow-up Survey Session

During this session both surveys (behavior management and patrol utilization) will be administered to all of the bus drivers by the assistant principal. Upon completion of both surveys they will be reviewed and each item briefly discussed.

The assistant principal will keep the completed surveys to complete the necessary evaluations to determine if program objectives relating to performance on the driver surveys were met.

Bus Ridership Responsibility Program (Teacher Guide)

I AM A RESPONSIBLE RIDER

Purpose: To provide all students in grades four-six with an overview of their responsibilities (conduct and safety) as bus riders. This student program is in conjunction with a bus driver training program which focuses on more effectively managing behavior. This program will be presented in the classroom setting.

Why is this important?

We have a serious and chronic problem at this school with students not being aware of their conduct and safety responsibilities as bus riders. Nearly 70% of our students ride buses and the majority of bus discipline referrals come from students in grades four-six. The problem of student bus misconduct has been somewhat addressed yet it is still with us to a large degree. It appears that students are not aware of their conduct and safety responsibilities as bus riders. This program will focus on making students aware of these responsibilities in a formal, systematic, and planned manner.

This program emphasizes personal responsibility for bus behavior and this factor should give the program tremendous transfer value to other areas as we emphasize this in our school discipline plan.

Your Role: The role of the classroom teacher is to present the program to the students in your room. If you show your students this is a serious subject they will take it seriously also! Your attitude is key to the success of this program!

The Assistant Principal's Role: The roles the assistant principal will assume include: training of teachers, analysis of completed student surveys, providing you with certificates (I AM A RESPONSIBLE RIDER) (See Appendix E) for your students when they complete the program, P.A. announcements during the program on its importance as it focuses on making our buses safer, sending a follow-up letter to the parents at the completion of the program (See Appendix F), serving as a resource person for you during the training session and during the program, and visiting your classroom once a month during the next three months to answer students questions and clarify and reinforce the concepts presented in the ridership program.

## Planning and Calendar Factors

You will be presenting this program during the week of September 8, 1986 (Monday 8 - Wednesday 10). There are three, 45 minute classroom sessions in this program. Each session has a focus which relates to making students more aware of their conduct and safety responsibilities as bus riders. You may present each session at the place in your daily schedule where it best can be assimilated. It can serve as a safety unit or a unit on responsibility and may be so noted in your lesson plan book.

The program will be described in narrative form so you will fully understand what to emphasize. Feel free to ask questions, raise concerns, and offer feedback at any point.

## I AM A RESPONSIBLE RIDER

### Session One (Monday, September 8,1986)
Focus: Setting the Tone

This session focuses on orienting students to this program and on developing student awareness of what personal responsibility for behavior means as it applies to bus behavior specifically. This session also focuses on developing student awareness of the link between correct bus behavior and safety (and incorrect bus behavior and decreased safety).

### 1.1 Program Orientation

Orientation to this program will be accomplished through a P.A. anouncement by the assistant principal (focusing on the goals and importance of this program) and by you discussing with your class how this program will help them become more responsible bus riders and how it will help make the buses safer. It is critical that you come across as genuine and believable or the students will not take this program seriously. Tell the students you expect them to participate and that their ideas are valued. Let the students know that a survey (not a test) will be given on Wednesday to see if they understood what was being presented. Tell the students that everyone who is involved in the program will receive a special certificate, signed by the assistant principal, which states heir a responsible bus rider. A letter to their parents will also go home.

The first area to be emphasized is responsibility. This should serve to reinforce a concept we stress in our discipline plan. Use the chalkboard and write what students understand responsibility to be. Elicit plenty of examples from the students of things they are responsible for and solidify this concept and its practical application in their minds. Once this has been accomplished you are ready to proceed to the second part of this session which focuses on personal responsibility for bus behavior.

### 1.2 Personal Responsibility for Bus Behavior

Building on the established theme of responsibility, move students into thinking about how responsibility fits into their behavior on the bus. The key point to emphasize is that you choose to act the way you do. No one makes you act in any certain way and you are responsible for your behavior - even on the bus! Elicit examples from the students of how they are responsible for their bus behavior (be prepared to get the ball rolling by offering examples). Discuss the common excuses for bus misconduct (my friend made me act up, someone else was acting up too, I couldn't help myself, or I don't know why I acted up on the bus). Point out that these excuses are not valid or acceptable as each student is responsible for his bus behavior. It is his choice to behave correctly or to misbehave.

Now tie this into the four reasons why bus students are referred to the assistant principal.

(1) Talking too loudly or with the dome lights on.

(2) Failure to remain seated.

(3) Disrespect to the driver.

(4) Fighting.

Stress the point that each individual student is responsible for and chooses to follow these bus rules or break these bus rules. No one forces anyone to either follow or break rules. Each individual decides how he/she is going to act on the bus. (This has been an area of concern as referred bus students have not demonstrated an awareness of their personal responsibility for their bus behavior). Talk about each of the above four bus rules in terms of how personal responsibility fits and elicit examples for each rule from the students. At this point review the concept that students are responsibile for their bus behavior and add a new concept that when they choose to act correctly they increase the level of safety on the bus (and they are responsbile for having a safer bus) and when they choose to act incorrectly they decrease the level of safety on the bus (and they are responsible for this decrease in bus safety).

## 1.3 The Link between Bus Behavior and Safety

This phase of this session focuses on getting students to understand that correct bus behavior increases the safety level on the bus while incorrect bus behavior decreases the level of safety on the buses. This ties directly into the concept of personal responsibility for bus behavior. The key point is that the students are responsible for either increasing or decreasing the level of safety on the bus through their bus behavior.

Elicit examples from the students as to how correct bus behavior makes the bus safer and how incorrect bus behavior makes the bus less safe. Focus on how they are responsible, via their bus behavior, for the bus being more or less safe.

Transition into how the four bus behaviors for which students are referred to the office (talking too loudly or with the dome lights on, failure to remain seated, disrespect to the driver, fighting) fit into the equation that correct bus behavior increases bus safety and incorrect bus behavior decreases the level of bus safety. Focus on specific examples relating to each of these four bus rules in terms of how following them increases bus safety and how breaking them decreases bus safety. Be sure to emphasize how personal responsibility fits into this.

Stress the importance of bus safety! This is the primary goal of our districts pupil transportation program. In stressing the importance of bus safety be sure to emphasize how it is the duty of bus riders to choose to behave in ways which increase the level of safety on the buses.

### 1.4 Closure

End this session by reviewing how personal responsibility for behavior applies to bus behavior and how correct bus behavior leads to increased bus safety and incorrect bus behavior leads to decreased bus safety. Stress the point that they are responsible for either increasing or decreasing the level of bus safety by choosing to behave in the way they do. Address any questions the students may have as part of your ending review.

## Session Two (Tuesday, September 9, 1986)
Focus: Bus Behavior and Consequences

This session reinforces the concept of responsibility for behavior and provides for further application of this concept. This session also analyzes the four bus behaviors for which students are referred to the assistant principal and reviews the range of disciplinary consequences which are applied when students are referred for bus misconduct.

### 2.1 Review on Responsibility

Review and reinforce the concept that each student is personally responsible for his/her own bus behavior and that bus behavior relates directly to bus safety. Conduct a discussion and get the students to provide examples of this concept.

## Referred Bus Behaviors

### 2.2 Talking too loudly or with the dome lights on

Discuss why the rule that students must talk quietly on the bus is important to bus safety. Elicit reasons and examples from the students. Be sure the students completely understand that when they don't talk quietly on the bus (scream, talk loudly or make unnecessary noise) they are decreasing the level of safety on the bus. The reason for the decrease in the level of safety is that the bus driver is distracted by the noise and cannot devote her attention to driving and to the road and this might lead to an accident. Reinforce the concept that when misbehavior distracts the driver and decreases the safety level on the bus. Relate to the concept of responsibility.

Next focus on the referred behavior of talking when the dome lights are on. The dome lights are put on at all railroad crossings, dangerous intersections, and at times when the driver needs silence so she can devote her full attention to the road. When the dome lights are on it is a signal that safety is a primary concern because of some type of road condition or potentially hazardous situation.

Get the students to describe the times when the dome lights were put on by the driver. Focus on the safety factor involved, what their response was, and why their response either increased or decreased the safety level on the bus. The key point to stress is that when the dome lights are on silence must be observed. The safety factor involved is critical and the students response to the dome lights can either increase or decrease bus safety.

2.3 Failure to remain seated

Failure to remain seated includes getting out of your seat while the bus is in motion, sitting in the seat incorrectly, and turning around in the seat while the bus is in motion. It is essential that you discuss why each of these seating concerns are important to their (the students) personal safety. Getting out of the seat while the bus is in motion can be a very serious safety problem. If the bus had to make a sudden stop, students could be injured by being thrown. Discuss this point with the students stressing the concern for their personal safety.

Sitting in the seat incorrectly is usually characterized by: (1) sitting on your knees, (2) sitting sideways and, (3) sitting with your feet in the aisle. Discuss how sitting on your knees could be dangerous if a sudden stop was made. Get the students to discuss this behavior, in terms of safety, as this is a major problem on the buses. Remember to stress the link between behavior and safety (in this case their personal safety).

Sitting with your feet in the aisle is totally unacceptable as it creates an obvious hazard for students who are attempting to exit the bus and could be hazardous to the student with his/her feet in the aisle in the event of a sudden stop.

Be sure to review all of the behaviors discussed relating to the failure to remain seated. Stress the safety factor involved and also emphasize the link between behavior and safety. In the case of this bus rule the concern for is their personal safety.

### 2.4 Disrespect to the Driver

Disrespect to the driver is usually characterized by talking back to the driver, making unnecessary and disrespectful comments to the driver, and disobeying the driver.

The key point to emphasize is that the bus driver is the adult in charge and shall be treated with the same level of respect as all other adults who work with children.

The already difficult job the bus driver has is made even more demanding when student disrespect becomes a factor. Point out to the students that the bus driver is exactly like their teacher on the bus and that the bus is considered a classroom and that classroom conduct expectations exist.

Talking back to the driver is the same as talking back to the teacher or principal. Discuss how the ramifications of this behavior are also the same in terms of disciplinary responses.

Making unnecessary and disrespectful comments to the driver follows the same line as talking back to the bus driver. Get the students to describe situations where this type of behavior was evidenced and tell why it was inappropriate.

Disobeying the bus driver relates to not following the directions the bus driver has issued. Relate this to not following the directions of a teacher or the principal (as they are all adults who work with children).

Get the children to describe instances where children disobeyed the bus driver, why this disobedience was wrong, and what was the outcome of this disobedience. The bus driver is in charge of the students and the directions she issues must be strictly adhered to as she is the adult in charge on the bus.

### 2.5 Fighting

Fighting is absolutely not allowed on the school bus. Fighting on the school bus is the same as fighting at school. When a fight occurs on the bus, the students may be injured from being up out of their seat and the driver is obviously distracted and may have to stop the bus to attend to the fight.

Because of the safety concerns associated with fighting on the bus, it is essential that students do not engage in this type of behavior. Get the students to describe situations where students have fought on the bus and what the outcome was in terms of possible safety factors and how it affected the driver and other students. Stress the concept that fighting is a behavior which absolutely decreases the level of safety on the buses and is a behavior that must be avoided.

### 2.6 Range of disciplinary responses for these four bus conduct infractions

Start off this portion of the session by reviewing the concept that when these behaviors (the ones analyzed above) are engaged in they will elicit disciplinary consequences from the assistant principal.

The general guideline to stress to the students is that there will be a disciplinary consequence for their choosing to engage in behaviors which decrease the level of safety on the buses.

The disciplinary response of the assistant principal will adhere to the Code of Student Conduct adopted in the district. This is an excellent opportunity to review the basic ideas behind the code (student rights and responsibilities, consistency in treatment, clear understanding of disciplinary responses for misconduct) and tie them into how bus misconduct is handled. Utilize the student copy of the Code of Conduct at this point in the session.

Bus misconduct can be dealt with by the following means:

parent contact / conferencing
counseling
assignment of a seat
behavior contracting (plan that states how you must act and what the consequences are for not following this plan)
corporal punishment (paddling)
bus suspension (from one-ten days)
bus expulsion (not allowed to ride the bus for the remainder of the year)

The factors relating to the incident and the number of referrals will play major roles in the determination of the consequence to be applied. Review each of these disciplinary responses with the students and point out that the consequences become progessively more serious in nature. Be sure to reemphasize that when students (choose to) misbehave, it is their choice that they receive any of these consequences, as they were responsible for decreasing the level of safety on the bus through their behavior. Faciliatate student discussion on this concept. Review session content.

Session Three Wednesday, September 10, 1986)
Focus: Review and Evaluation

This session focuses on reviewing the content covered in the previous two sessions, conducting the student ridership responsibilities survey, distributing the certificates to students, and distributing the parental letter to the students.

### 3.1 Critical Concepts to be Reviewed

(1) Personal responsibility for bus behavior. No one makes you act any certain way. You choose to act in whichever way you desire to and excuses for behavior are not acceptable.

(2) The relationship between bus behavior and bus safety. Appropriate bus behavior leads to increased bus safety and inappropriate bus behavior leads to decreased bus safety. The concept that when students choose to act inappropriately they are responsible for decreasing the level of bus safety.

(3) The four bus behaviors for which students are referred to the assistant principal. Relate these to increasing or decreasing bus safety. (Talking too loudly or with the dome lights on, failure to remain seated, disrespect for the driver, fighting).

(4) The disciplinary consequences described in the Code of Student Conduct relating to bus conduct.

Address any questions or concerns the students have and clarify areas of uncertainty. This review will prepare students for the survey.

## 3.2 Student Survey

Distribute the surveys to all of the students. Emphasize this is not a test! The surveys are designed to see how well they understand what their responsibilities are as bus riders. Be sure all students understand the format (yes-no). Read each item to the students and direct them to respond to it as per the directions. (Check (X) yes if the item represents a ridership responsibility they have and check (X) no if the item does not represent a ridership responsibility). Students who are absent on this date will be given the survey when they return. The classroom teacher will be responsible for absentee surveys. All teachers will have 10 extra survey forms. Collect all surveys once the 10 items are completed and orally review each item with the entire class. Discuss each item and be sure the students can verbalize why it was or was not representative of a ridership responsibility. This activity should serve to tie together the content presented in the sessions. Return the surveys along with a list of names of absent students to the assistant principal before you leave for the day. As absentee surveys are completed send them to the office.

## 3.3 Distribution of Certificates and Letters to Parents

The classroom teacher will distribute a certificate and parental letter to all students. Stress the importance of getting the letter home and how proud the students should be because now they better understand how to be a more responsible bus rider who can help make our buses safer through appropriate bus behavior. The assistant principal will reinforce these points via the P.A. system Wednesday afternoon.

## Chapter V

## RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results obtained in this practicum are presented in relation to the five projected outcome objectives described in Chapter III. The format for the presentation of the results will include a narrative section, an accompanying chart and a discussion on the results obtained for each of the objectives. This chapter will also include conclusions, recommendations, and plans for networking and dissemination.

### Objective One: Results Obtained

This objective projected a 50% decrease in the total number of bus referrals received during the first three months (September - November) of the 1986-87 school year. For this objective to be realized the total number of bus referrals received would need to decrease from 74 to 37.

The actual total number of bus referrals rceived at the end of this three month period was 30. This represents a decrease of 59%, indicating that the projected outcome was surpassed by 9%.

The following chart depicts the total number of 1985-86 bus referrals, the projected outcome criteria (37 referrals), the actual total number of 1986-87 bus referrals and the percent of decrease in total bus referrals.

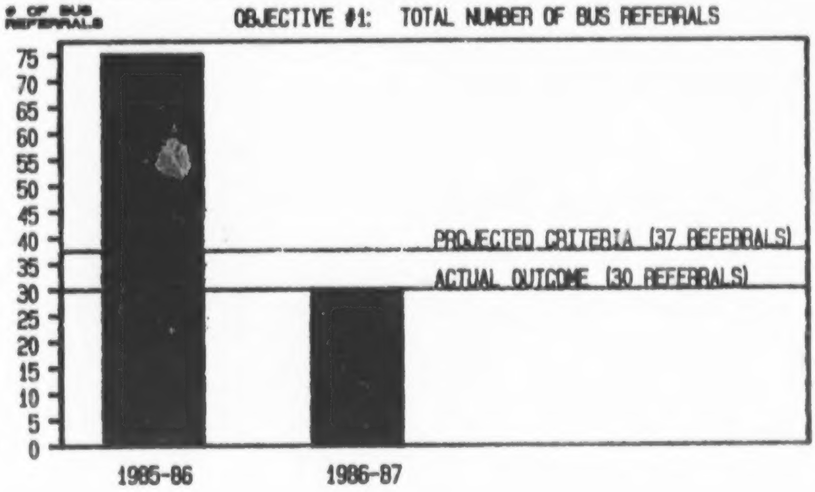


FIGURE 2

Discussion

The 59% decrease in total bus referrals received represents a substantial improvement in student bus conduct according to the area transportation director.

In analyzing the results obtained it appeared that the total array of activities which collectively comprised the solution strategy provided the comprehensive approach needed to address the identified causal factors of this problem. The active involvement of all bus drivers, students in grades four - six, classroom teachers in grades four - six, the area transportation director, and the assistant principal appears to have been a major factor in the realization of this objective.

It was the judgement of the area transportation director, the principal, and the writer that bus drivers and students were substantially more aware of their responsibilities and expectations than they were prior to the implementation of the solution strategy.

Objective Two: Results Obtained

This objective projected a 50% decrease in the total number of bus referrals received for each of the four referred bus behaviors. This projected decrease would be from 1985-86 (September - November) levels, in terms of specific numbers of referrals.

The first infraction for which students were referred, talking too loudly or with the dome lights on, had a 1985-86 referral level of 30 and there were 12 referrals received for this infraction at the end of practicum implementation, This represents a 60% decrease and exceeds the projected outcome criteria by 10%.

The next infraction for which students were referred, failure to remain seated while the bus is in motion, had a 1985-86 referral level of 23 and there were nine referrals received for this infraction at the end of practicum implementation. This represents a 61% decrease and exceeds the the projected outcome criteria by 11%.

The next infraction for which students were referred, disrespect to the driver, had a 1985-86 referral level of 15 and there were six referrals received for this infraction at the end of practicum implementation. This represents a 60% decrease and exceeds the projected outcome criteria by 10%.

The final infraction for which students were referred, fighting, had a 1985-86 referral level of six and there were three referrals received for this infraction at the end of practicum implementation. This represents a 50% decrease and indicates that the projected outcome criteria was precisely met.

Discussion

The projected outcome objective was surpassed for talking too loudly or with the dome lights on, failure to remain seated while the bus is in motion, and for disrespect to the driver. The projected outcome objective was precisely met for fighting.

The principal, area transportation director and writer all perceived the primary probable cause of these results to be the comprehensive array of specifically focused activities which collectively comprised the solution strategy. Cause and effect cannot be established; however, it appears that the solution strategy substantially impacted the results obtained to a large degree.

The driver and student training programs both had components which specifically addressed and examined these bus behaviors in terms of causes, prevention, and responsibilities. This focused emphasis appears to have increased driver and student awareness of their respective and interdependent roles in improving bus behavior. The concrete and specific information presented in both training programs was designed to specifically address observed and identified trends in driver and student behavior which did not allow for these bus behaviors to improve.

The results obtained in relation to this objective (and objective number one) tended to corroborate Witmer's (1980) assertion that the use of classroom time to teach students essential and specific elements of appropriate bus conduct was an effective practice. The use of classroom time should be focused on the specific bus problems areas.

These results also tended to confirm the contention by Gresham (1983) that specifically targeted driver training programs in effective behavior management have been correlated with reduced levels of student misconduct on school buses.

The level of total bus referrals received and the number of referrals received for each infraction will be monitored by the writer and the area transportation director so interventions may be made if the trend of decreased numbers of referrals changes.

## Objective Three: Results Obtained

This objective projected that all 13 bus drivers would select the five effective behavior management strategies, from the ten possible strategies presented on the written training program survey. (See Appendix A for the behavior management survey)

The actual results obtained were that 11 of the 13 bus drivers (85%) selected the five effective behavior management strategies. These results indicate that the projected performance criteria was not achieved. Driver number five and driver eleven did not achieve the projected outcome.

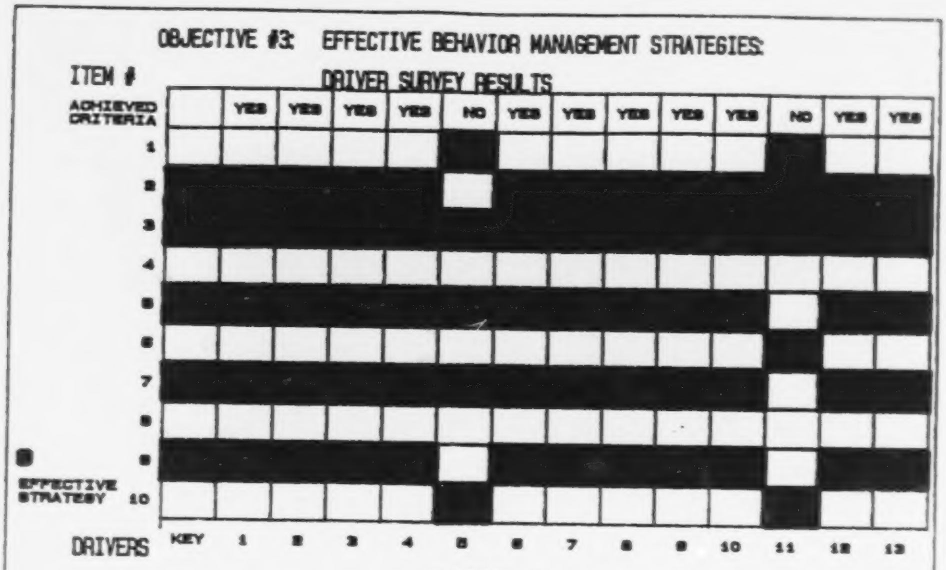
Driver number five selected three of the five effective strategies presented in the survey and driver number eleven selected two of the five effective strategies.

Each of these driver's responses will be presented. Driver number five selected items one and ten as being effective strategies when they were not. This driver omitted items two and nine, which were effective strategies. This driver also correctly identified items three, five, and seven as being effective strategies.

Driver number eleven selected items one, six, and ten as being effective strategies when they were not. This driver omitted items five, seven, and nine which were effective strategies. This driver correctly identified items two and three as being effective strategies.

In analyzing the response patterns of both of these drivers it was noted that both drivers incorrectly selected items one and ten as being effective strategies and both drivers omitted item nine which was an effective strategy. The possible reasons for the responses of these drivers are presented in the discussion section.

The following chart depicts the ten possible items (with the five correct items shaded) on the survey, the responses of each driver and an indication of achievement/ nonachievement of the projected outcome criteria.



OBJECTIVE #3: EFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES:
DRIVER SURVEY RESULTS

| ITEM # | KEY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ACHIEVED CRITERIA | | YES | YES | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES |
| 1 | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | □ |
| 2 | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| 3 | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| 4 | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| 5 | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ |
| 6 | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | □ |
| 7 | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ |
| 8 | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| 9 | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ |
| 10 | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | □ |

■ EFFECTIVE STRATEGY

DRIVERS

FIGURE 3

Discussion

In deliberating as to the appropriate level of achievement to be set as the projected outcome criteria, the writer and area transportation director believed that all bus drivers should have been able to select the five effective behavior management strategies. These strategies were presented in the driver training program.

Although the projected outcome criteria was not achieved, the actual outcome level was acceptable and satisfactory to the writer and area transportation director. Actual driver behavior, driver compliance with the guidelines established in the training program, and the level of referrals received were judged as being acceptable.

The postulated reasons for the responses of driver number five and driver number eleven will be explored.

Driver number five felt strongly that children could effectively supervise other children. This driver believed that if the children serving as patrols were mature and could make others listen to them they would be able to supervise other children. This belief appeared to have influenced her responses on the survey. This driver also believed that it was appropriate to refer students based on reports from patrols. The driver believed that if the patrols were children who could be trusted they could report incidents to be written as referrals. Although this driver verbally expressed these beliefs, her behavior was in compliance with the established guidelines and procedures relating to behavior management. This driver also felt that she had driven a bus many years and understood what it took to control student bus behavior. This appeared to be an underlying theme which impacted her responses on the survey. This driver felt she had a proven good record in managing student bus behavior.

The beliefs expressed by this driver in the training sessions and monthly meetings were clearly reflected in her performance on the survey. This driver fully complied with all of the behavior management guidelines and procedures established. Although this driver did not agree with or seem to understand the thinking behind the established guidelines and procedures, compliance with them was readily observed. This was not the ideal situation (compliance without understanding or support) but it was an acceptable situation in light of her strongly held beliefs and her actual behavior.

Driver number eleven also held very strong beliefs about strategies for effective management of bus conduct. This driver was very vocal in the driver training program as to what she believed in due to her experience. This factor appears to have significantly impacted her responses on the survey. This driver believed in sentence writing as a punishment and having patrols supervise other children. This driver correctly believed that consistency was critical to effectively managing behavior and that it was very important for the driver to determine and understand the causes of student bus misconduct in order to solve the problem.

This driver's performance on the survey was not surprising in view of her expressed beliefs. This driver's actual behavior was fully in compliance with the behavior management guidelines established. Compliance with the established guidelines without the full understanding or support of the driver was not the ideal situation, but one which was acceptable as consistency in procedure and expectation had been clearly established and readily observed by the writer and area transportation director.

The responses of driver five and driver eleven did not surprise the writer and the area transportation director and did not reflect actual driver behavior and practice.

The writer and area transportation director were in total agreement that the results obtained were the acceptable and satisfactory and that full compliance with guidelines relating to managing student conduct was established. Even though two drivers did not verbalize support for these guidelines they complied fully.

The results obtained by the other eleven drivers tended to confirm the effectiveness of the driver training program and corroborated the assertion, found in the literature, that targeted training for bus drivers on effective behavior management could improve student bus conduct.

The substantial reduction in the number of bus referrals received also tended to confirm the effectiveness of the driver training program and the student training program.

The establishment of consistency in procedure and expectation (relating to behavior management) appears to be a causal factor in the reduction of bus referrals and the improvement of student bus behavior. All bus drivers consistently displayed full compliance with the established behavior management guidelines and it was from this perspective that the results obtained were deemed acceptable.

## Objective Four: Results Obtained

This objective projected that all 13 bus drivers would select the five effective patrol utilization strategies from the 10 possible strategies presented on a written survey. (See Appendix B for the patrol utilization survey)

The actual results obtained were that 10 of the 13 bus drivers (77%) selected the five effective strategies. These results indicate that the projected performance criteria was not achieved. Driver three, driver five, and driver eleven did not achieve the projected outcome.

Driver number three selected one of the five effective strategies presented. Driver number five selected two of the effective strategies. Driver number eleven selected two of the effective strategies.

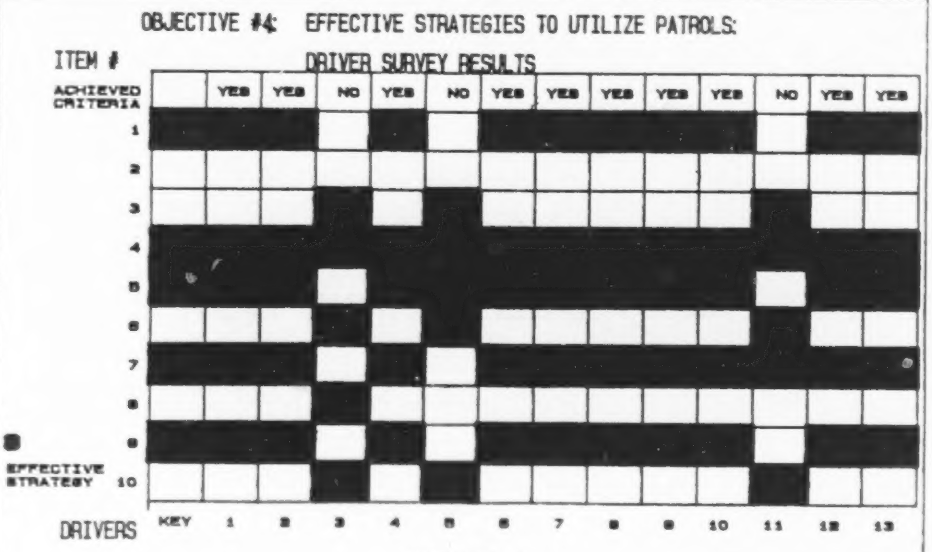
Each of these drivers responses will be presented. Driver number three selected items three, six, eight, and ten as being effective strategies when they were not. This driver omitted items one, five, seven, and nine which were effective strategies and correctly identified item four as an effective strategy.

Driver number five selected items three, six, and ten as being effective strategies when they were not. This driver omitted items one, seven, and nine which were effective strategies and correctly identified items four and five as effective strategies.

Driver number eleven selected items three, six, and ten as being effective strategies when they were not. This driver omitted items one, five, and nine which were effective strategies and correctly identified items four and seven as being effective strategies.

In analyzing the response patterns of these three drivers it was noted that all three drivers omitted item one, all three drivers incorrectly selected item three, all three drivers incorrectly selected item six, and all three drivers incorrectly selected item ten. The possible reasons for the responses of these drivers are presented in the discussion section.

The following chart depicts the ten items (with the five correct items shaded) on the survey, the responses of each driver, and an indication of achievement / nonachievement of the projected outcome criteria.



OBJECTIVE #4: EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO UTILIZE PATROLS:

DRIVER SURVEY RESULTS

| ITEM # |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ACHIEVED CRITERIA |  | YES | YES | NO | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES |
| 1 | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ |
| 2 | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| 3 | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | ■ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | □ |
| 4 | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| 5 | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ |
| 6 | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | ■ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | □ |
| 7 | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| 8 | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| 9 | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | □ | ■ | ■ |
| 10 | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | ■ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | ■ | □ | □ |
| DRIVERS | KEY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |

■ EFFECTIVE STRATEGY

FIGURE 4

## Discussion

In deliberating as to the appropriate level of achievement to be set as the projected outcome criteria, the writer and area transportation director believed that all drivers should have been able to select the five effective patrol utilization strategies. Although the projected outcome criteria was not achieved, the actual outcome level was acceptable and satisfactory to the writer and area transportation director. In light of actual driver behavior, driver compliance with the patrol guidelines established in the training program and observed patrol behavior, the results obtained were judged acceptable.

The postulated reasons for the responses of driver three, driver five, and driver eleven will be explored. Driver number three felt strongly that it was not the job of the driver to guide bus patrols. She believed patrols should be able to function without direct supervision. This belief appeared to be the rationale for many of her responses. The area transportation director believed that this particular driver would never change her beliefs, but had changed her behavior. This driver strongly believed that it was an appropriate function and expectation that patrols be able to get other children to listen to and obey them. This belief influenced her incorrect response to item three.

This driver felt that each individual driver should be allowed to develop the scope of duties patrols perform and that standardizing duties was not an effective practice. This was another belief which influenced her omissions and selection of incorrect items.

This driver believed that children could and should be allowed to supervise other children. The belief system this driver maintained and verbalized in the training sessions apparently influenceed her choices on the survey. This driver's actual behavior and practice was in compliance with the established guidelines and procedures.

Driver number five held many similar beliefs to those of driver number three. This driver believed that guidance of patrols by the driver was unnecessary and that patrols either did their job or needed to be replaced.

This driver also strongly believed in the appropriateness of patrols having the ability to make other children listen and in the appropriateness of patrols performing supervisory duties.

This driver also felt that each driver should be allowed to train patrols to meet the differing needs of each bus. The beliefs expressed by this driver in the training sessions were reflected in her performance on the survey. This driver fully adhered to all of the patrol utilization guidelines established and compliance with them was readily observed.

Driver number eleven held beliefs similar to those of driver three and driver five, in that she felt strongly about the appropriateness of children supervising children, drivers establishing patrol duties, patrols possessing the ability to make other children listen, and the inappropriateness of drivers giving patrols guidance.

This driver's performance on the survey was not surprising in light of her expressed beliefs during the training sessions. This driver fully complied with and adhered to the established guidelines.

The response patterns of driver three, driver five, and driver eleven did not surprise the writer or the area transportation director and did not reflect actual behavior and practice.

The writer and area transportation director were in total agreement that the results obtained were acceptable and satisfactory and that full compliance with the guidelines relating to bus patrols was established.

The results obtained by the other ten drivers tended to verify the effectiveness of the driver training targeted at improving the use of student bus patrols. The consistency which was established in patrol utilization, patrol duties, and patrol selection and training procedures was a positive outcome of this practicum.

Although the projected outcome was not achieved on the survey all of the bus drivers fully adhered to the patrol guidelines established. It was from this perspective that the results obtained were deemed acceptable and satisfactory.

## Objective Five: Results Obtained

This objective projected that 80% of the students in each grade (four, five, and six) would select the five ridership responsibilities they have as bus riders. (See Appendix C for the ridership responsibilities survey)

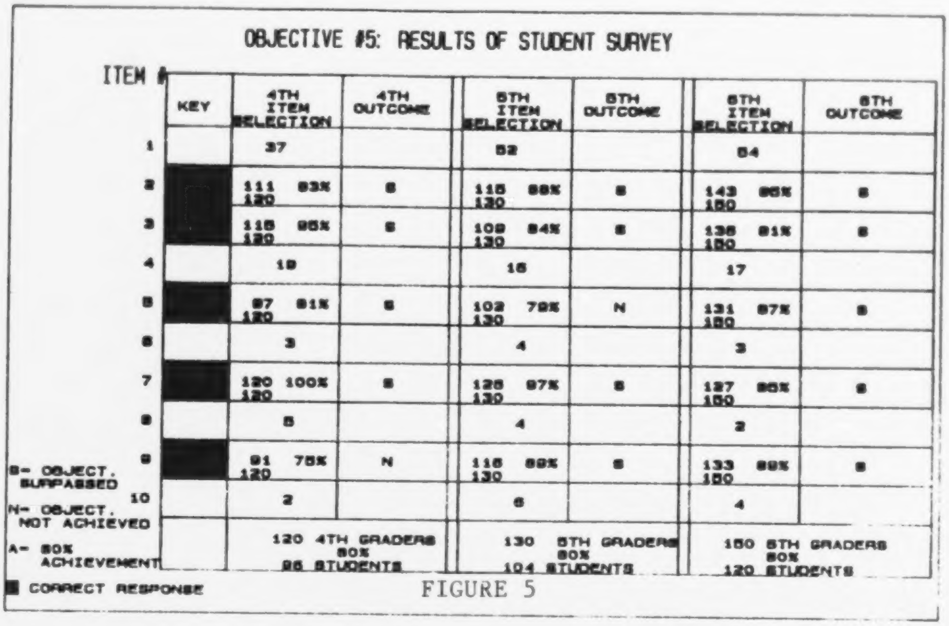
The actual results obtained were that: (1) in grade four, four of the five correct items were selected by 80% (or better) of the students and the other correct item was selected by 75% of the students, (2) in grade five, four of the five correct items were selected by 80% (or better) of the students and the other correct item was selected by 79% of the students, and (3) in grade six, all five of the correct items were selected by 80% (or better) of the students.

The results obtained by each grade level will be presented. In grade four, 93% of the students correctly selected item number two as a ridership responsibility, 95% of the students correctly selected item number three, 81% of the students correctly selected item number five, 100% of the students correctly selected item number seven, and 75% of the students correctly selected item number nine. Item number nine was the item which did not achieve the projected outcome criteria at this grade level.

In grade five, 88% of the students correctly selected item number two, 84% of the students correctly selected item number three, 79% of the students correctly selected item number five, 97% of the students correctly selected item number seven, and 89% of the students correctly selected item number nine as a ridership responsibilitiy. Item number five was the item which did not achieve the projected outcome criteria at this grade level.

In grade six, 95% of the students correctly selected item number two, 91% of the students correctly selected item number three, 87% of the students correctly selected item number five, 85% of the students correctly selected item number seven, and 89% of the students correctly selected item number nine as a ridership responsibility. This grade level achieved the projected outcome criteria for all five of the ridership responsibilities presented on the student survey.

The following chart depicts (by grade level) the number of and percent of students selecting each item, the five correct items (ridership responsibilities), and an indication of achievement or nonachievement of the projected outcome criteria.



OBJECTIVE #5: RESULTS OF STUDENT SURVEY

| ITEM # | KEY | 4TH ITEM SELECTION | 4TH OUTCOME | 5TH ITEM SELECTION | 5TH OUTCOME | 6TH ITEM SELECTION | 6TH OUTCOME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | 37 | | 52 | | 54 | |
| 2 | ■ | 111/120 93% | S | 115/130 88% | S | 143/150 95% | S |
| 3 | ■ | 115/120 96% | S | 109/130 84% | S | 136/150 91% | S |
| 4 | | 19 | | 16 | | 17 | |
| 5 | ■ | 97/120 81% | S | 102/130 78% | N | 131/150 87% | S |
| 6 | | 3 | | 4 | | 3 | |
| 7 | ■ | 120/120 100% | S | 126/130 97% | S | 127/150 85% | S |
| 8 | | 5 | | 4 | | 2 | |
| 9 | ■ | 91/120 76% | N | 116/130 89% | S | 133/150 89% | S |
| 10 | | 2 | | 6 | | 4 | |
| | | 120 4TH GRADERS<br>80%<br>96 STUDENTS | | 130 5TH GRADERS<br>80%<br>104 STUDENTS | | 150 6TH GRADERS<br>80%<br>120 STUDENTS | |

S- OBJECT. SURPASSED

N- OBJECT. NOT ACHIEVED

A- 80% ACHIEVEMENT

■ CORRECT RESPONSE

FIGURE 5

## Discussion

Although only students in grade six achieved the 80% criteria for each of the five ridership responsibilities, the results obtained for grades four and five are viewed as acceptable. In light of the decreased numbers of bus referrals received, the percent of students who selected each of the five correct items, and the observed and reported bus behavior of students the results obtained are viewed as satisfactory.

The item which did not meet the projected outcome in grade four (item number nine) was correctly selected by 75% of the students and it was the mutual perception of the writer and classroom teachers at this grade level (who administered the student survey) that some of the wording used in this item may have been confusing to some students.

Students in grade four understood that correct bus behavior increases bus safety and that the bus driver is the adult in charge on the bus. These students also understood that sitting correctly increases personal safety and that fighting on the bus is absolutely wrong and causes safety problems. The improvement in bus behavior was observed in the decreased number of bus referrals received by students in grade four.

In grade five the item which did not meet the projected outcome was item number five. In grade five, 79% of the students correctly selected this item. The writer and classroom teachers at this grade level believed that some students at this grade level deliberately answered this item (relating to sitting correctly) incorrectly for any number of possible reasons. The actual bus behavior of students in this grade was judged as improved when utilizing bus referrals received as the measure of improvement.

Students at grade five understood that correct bus behavior improves bus safety, that the adult in charge on the bus is the driver, and that fighting on the bus is absolutely wrong.

Students in grade six achieved the projected outcome criteria for each of the five ridership responsibilities presented on the student survey. The classroom teachers at this grade level all felt that the vast majority of students were serious about the survey and about the training program.

The improvement in the bus behavior of students in grade six was observed in the decreased number of bus referrals received.

In light of the improved student bus behavior by students in grades four, five, and six, the actual results obtained were acceptable and tended to verify the effectiveness of the student training program.

The classroom teachers who presented the program and administered the student survey all felt that this program was a worthwhile use of classroom time. One recommendation that 25% of the teachers had was that someone else should have presented the program.

This student training program will be presented to the remainder of the school in the spring of 1987. The principal believed that this program increased student awareness of the link between conduct and safety and was a very worthwhile use of classroom time as a valuable and relevant safety lesson.

## Conclusions

Upon analyzing the results obtained in this practicum the following conclusions have been arrived at and will be discussed.

(1) Student bus behavior was substantially improved when numbers of bus referrals received was utilized as the measure of progress. The decrease in the number of bus referrals received reflected a real improvement in actual student bus behavior. The solution strategy appeared to have provided the comprehensive and specific approach needed to address the identified causal factors of this problem.

(2) The driver training program was judged, on balance, to be a successful component of the solution strategy which provided the bus drivers with information, strategies, and guidelines on how to more effectively manage behavior and utilize patrols. This program established consistency in expectation and procedure and successfully addressed the causal factors of the problem which related to driver use of patrols and behavior management techniques. Compliance with the guidelines presented in the driver training program was established and is being maintained. The active participation of all of the bus drivers in the solution process was critical to the effectiveness and ultimate success of this strategy. Shared ownership in the solution process was established through the active participation of the bus drivers.

(3) The student training program was judged, on balance, to be a successful component of the solution strategy which provided students in grades four, five, and six

with planned and targeted information on their responsiblities as bus riders and on the link between appropriate bus conduct and the level of safety present on the buses. This program was successful as it provided students with consistent information about their ridership responsibilities and actively involved them in the solution process. The classroom delivery of this program helped establish a sense of ownership in the solution process.

## Recommendations

A recommendaton to other professionals considering this type of approach to improving student bus conduct at the elementary school level is to design a program which addresses the specific and sometimes unique needs of the presenting problem. Many of the behavior improvement programs reviewed did not address the specific needs of the problem focused on in terms of casual factors and logistical and policy constraints. A second major recommendation is to involve as many groups (drivers, parents, teachers, students, district personnel, school administrators) who are directly or indirectly impacted by the problem in the solution process. Their collective input, feedback, and support appears to be essential to this process being effective. A problem which directly or indirectly impacts so many groups must include all of these groups in the solution process.

## Plans for Furthering This Solution

Plans for furthering this solution strategy in the writer's work setting include: (1) adapting the student training program so it can be presented to all students in grades kindergarten - three. The adaptations needed relate to gearing the concepts and vocabulary to the level of understanding of primary children. (2) Presenting the student training program to all students in the fall of the 1987-88 school year. Plans include training volunteer parents to present this program to the children. (3) Repeating the driver training program at the start of the 1987-88 school year to maintain consistency in expectation and procedure. Modifications to this program are projected to include meeting with the drivers once each quinmester rather than once each month and dropping the written driver survey from the training program.

## Plans for Dissemination and Networking

Plans for dissemination and networking include sharing the results of this practicum with other elementary school assistant principals (at a sharing session in the Beginning Principals Program) and presenting a brief overview of the practicum to the four area transportation directors in the district. Further plans for dissemination include presenting a brief overview of the practicum to the Local School Advisory Council and presenting a brief overview of the practicum at an elementary principals cluster meeting.

These dissemination and networking strategies focus on school and district level presentations to audiences which have a professional interest in the area this practicum focused its emphasis.

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# APPENDIX A

# BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT SURVEY

## Behavior Management Survey

Name:________________________________________

Direction: Read each item carefully. If it is representative of an effective behavior management strategy check (X) yes. If the item is not representative of an effective behavior management strategy check (X) no.

___ _X_
YES NO
1. It is important that you allow the most responsible children the honor of supervising other children

_X_ ___
YES NO
2. To effectively solve bus problems you must first focus on the underlying causes of these problems.

_X_ ___
YES NO
3. It is critical that you are consistent in your interactions with children as this gives them a predictable environment they equate with fairness.

___ _X_
YES NO
4. It is an effective practice to keep children guessing as to what your disciplinary responses are for rule infractions.

_X_ ___
YES NO
5. It is an effective practice for you to establish what the limits of acceptable behavior are on your bus and to communicate these expectations to the students.

___ _X_
YES NO
6. Having students who fail to remain in a seat write sentences is an example of the effective use of a logical consequence.

_X_ ___ 7. Children serving as bus patrols should be utilized as providers of services rather than supervisors.
YES NO

___ _X_ 8. To best solve bus problems you first must increase the severity of the corrective actions taken to resolve the presenting behavior.
YES NO

_X_ ___ 9. It is an effective practice to utilize logical consequences for rule infractions as children can equate the consequences to the rule violation.
YES NO

___ _X_ 10. It is an effective practice to refer students to the assistant principal based upon the report of a bus patrol.
YES NO

Key to Behavior Management Survey

| Item | Correct Response | Rational |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | No | Children cannot supervise other children. |
| 2. | Yes | Underlying causes of problems must be examined first. |
| 3. | Yes | Consistency is essential to effective behavior management. |
| 4. | No | Children need structure and predictability. |
| 5. | Yes | Establishing and communicating limits of acceptability is crucial to effective behavior management. |
| 6. | No | The logical consequence must relate logically to the infraction. |
| 7. | Yes | Bus patrols can serve, not supervise. |
| 8. | No | The cause of the problem must be addressed |

first.

9. Yes Logical consequences help children relate consequences to rule infractions.

10. No You must witness any incident you report to the assistant principal via a bus referral.

# APPENDIX B

# PATROL UTILIZATION SURVEY

## Patrol Utilization Survey

NAME:______________________________________________

Directions: Read each item carefully. If the item is representative of an effective patrol utilization strategy check (X) yes. If the item is not representative of an effective patrol utilization strategy check (X) no.

_X_ ___
YES NO
1. It is the responsibility of the bus driver to provide bus patrols with guidance on how to improve their performance.

___ _X_
YES NO
2. Bus patrols do not have to follow the bus rules other children follow. They are helping you supervise and deserve this privelege.

___ _X_
YES NO
3. The primary criteria for the selection of a bus patrol should be the ability to make other children listen to and obey them.

_X_ ___
YES NO
4. Children serving as bus patrols must serve as models of acceptable behavior for other students on the bus.

_X_ ___
YES NO
5. It is the responsibility of the bus driver to ensure that bus patrols strictly adhere to list of duties developed by the school.

___ _X_
YES NO
6. The practice of children supervising other children is an effective one.

_X_ ___
YES NO
7. It is the responsibility of the bus driver to pay careful attention to who is nominated to serve as a bus patrol, so only students with the highest potential to serve effectively

are chosen.

___ _X_ 8. It is an effective practice to allow bus patrols to be on duty while the driver is not on the bus.
YES NO

_X_ ___ 9. The training and orientation of all bus patrols via a systematic procedure is an effective practice as it helps ensure consistency.
YES NO

___ _X_ 10. It is an effective practice to allow each bus driver to develop a list of patrol duties for each bus as consistency is not critical in this area.
YES NO

Key to Patrol Utilization Survey

| Item | Correct Response | Rationale |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Yes | Continuing guidance on improving performance is essential for patrols. |
| 2. | No | Patrols must adhere to the same rules as all other bus riders. |
| 3. | No | There is a list of criteria for selection as a patrol and ability to make others listen is not a consideration. |
| 4. | Yes | Bus patrols are role models on the bus. |
| 5. | Yes | The duties of bus patrols are consistent for each bus. |
| 6. | No | Children cannot supervise other children and this practice is prohibited by district policy. |
| 7. | Yes | Careful selection of patrol candidates is a must as children who demonstrate or have the potential for effective service are desired. |
| 8. | No | Patrols are only on duty when the driver is on the bus to supervise them. |

9. Yes The systemic training and orientation procedure described in the program will help ensure consistency in patrol expectation and performance.

10. No The list of patrol duties must be the same on each bus if patrols are to be utilized appropriately and effectively.

# APPENDIX C

# STUDENT RIDERSHIP SURVEY

## Ridership Responsibility Survey

NAME:____________________________TEACHER:________________________

Direction: Your Teacher will read item aloud as you read it to yourself. Think about the item and if it is a responsibility you have as a bus rider check (X) yes. If the item is something a responsible bus rider would not do check (X) no. Do your very best to show that you understand what it takes to be a responsible bus rider. This is not a test!

| YES | NO | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | X | 1. | Other people can make me act up or misbehave on the bus. |
| X | | 2. | When I behave correctly on the bus it increases the safety on the bus. |
| X | | 3. | The bus driver is the adult in charge on the bus and must be treated with respect. |
| | X | 4. | When the dome lights are on, it is ok to talk softly. |
| X | | 5. | It is very important that you sit correctly on the bus. |
| | X | 6. | You can sit on your knees or turn around in your seat and still be a safe bus rider. |
| X | | 7. | Fighting on the bus is absolutely wrong and can cause harm and safety problems. |
| | X | 8. | You can ignore directions given to you by the bus driver if you think she is being unfair. |

_X_ ___ 9. When you act incorrectly on the bus you are choosing to receive a consequence from the Code of Student Conduct.
YES NO

___ _X_ 10. When you act incorrectly on the bus it does not affect the level of safety on the bus.
YES NO

Student Ridership Responsibilitties

Key (To be used in ending summary)

| Item | Key Points |
|---|---|
| 1. No | You choose to act the way you do. Blaming others is an excuse. |
| 2. Yes | Correct bus behavior increases the level of safety on the bus. |
| 3. Yes | The bus driver is an adult in charge of children who must be respected the same as all other adults. |
| 4. No | When the dome lights are on absolute silence is required. A potentially hazardous situation exists. |
| 5. Yes | Sitting correctly increases your safety and helps keep you from getting hurt. |
| 6. No | Sitting on your knees or turning around in your seat are unsafe practices. |
| 7. Yes | Fighting is always prohibited on the bus as it is a serious safety problem. |
| 8. No | You must follow all of the directions the bus driver gives you as she is the adult in charge on the bus. |

9. Yes It is your choice to act correctly or incorrectly and incorrect behavior will lead to a consequence from the Code of Student Conduct.

10. No Incorrect bus behavior decreases the level of safety on the bus.

# APPENDIX D

# IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

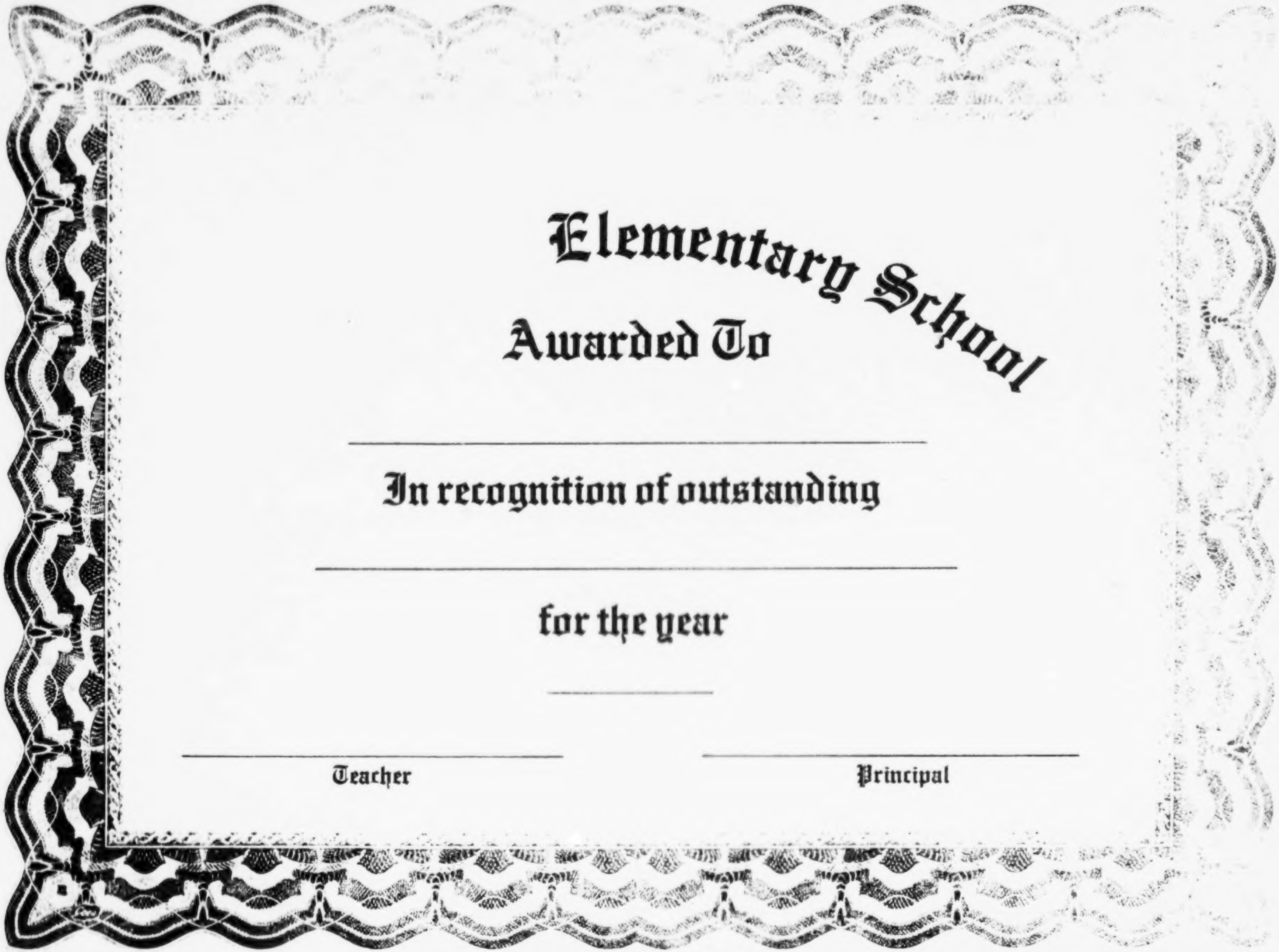
## Implementation Calendar

| | |
|---|---|
| August 25-29 | Bus Driver Training Program 12:15-1:15 Rm 216 |
| August 25 | Session One/ Overview, causes of misbehavior, problem solving model |
| August 26 | Session Two/ Limits of acceptable behavior, consistency |
| August 27 | Session Three/ Logical consequences,analyzing referred bus behavior |
| August 27 | Teacher Training Session 1:45-3pm, Media Center |
| August 28 | Session Four/Effectively utilizing bus patrols |
| August 29 | Session Five/ Review of sessions, preparation for surveys |
| September 2-5 | Make-up sessions for bus drivers (if needed) (Not Needed) |
| September 3 | Monthly Bus Driver meeting |
| September 8-10 | Student Training Program (Grades Four-Six) |
| September 8 | Session One |
| September 8 | PA Announcement (Orientation) by Assistant Principal |
| September 9 | Session Two |
| September 9 | PA Announcement by Assistant Principal |
| September 10 | Session Three/ Review, Survey, Certificate & Letter distributed |
| September 10 | PA Anouncement by Assistant Principal |
| September 10 | Student Surveys to Assistant Principal by 3pm |
| September 12 | Absentee student surveys to Assistant Principal |
| September 15 | Driver Survey Session 12:30-1pm Rm. 216 (Behavior Management-Patrol Utilization) |
| September 15 | Bus referral monitoring starts |
| September 15 | Teacher Surveys to Assistant Principal |

| | |
|---|---|
| September 15 | Monthly classroom visitations |
| September 16-19 | Make-up of Absentee Driver Survey (if needed) (Not Needed) |
| September 22-26 | Analysis of Driver and Student Surveys. |
| October 1 | Monthly Bus Driver meeting |
| October 24 | Monthly classroom visitations |
| November 5 | Monthly Bus Driver meeting |
| November 15 | Bus referral monitoring ends |
| November 18 | Monthly classroom visitations |
| November 16 thru January 15 | Analysis of referral data / preparation of practicum report |

# APPENDIX E

# RIDERSHIP CERTIFICATE



## Elementary School

**Awarded To**

______________________________

**In recognition of outstanding**

______________________________

**for the year**

__________

______________________ ______________________

Teacher Principal

# APPENDIX F

# LETTER TO PARENTS

## Letter to Parents

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We have as one of our 1986-87 school goals the improvement of bus conduct. To achieve this goal we have:

* Conducted a bus driver training program which focused on our specific needs in this area.
* Conducted a ridership responsibilities program for all students in grades four - six, which focused on personal responsibility for bus behavior, appropriate bus behavior, and the link between bus behavior and bus safety.
* Redefined bus patrol selection procedures and standardized the duties of bus patrols to reflect a service rather than a supervision emphasis.

Please reinforce with your child the importance of appropriate bus conduct as it is essential to the safe transportation of our students. Working together we can improve the conduct on our school buses.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions you would like to share.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Assistant Principal